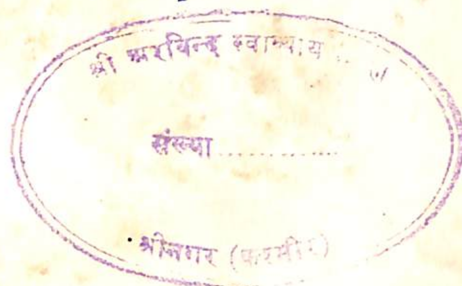
MOTHER INDIA

MONTHLY REVIEW OF CULTURE

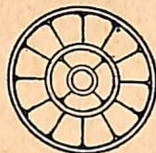


MARCH, 1957

MOTHER INDIA

MARCH, 1957

Price: Re. 1.

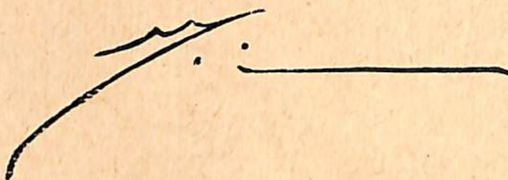


Lord, Thou hast willed, and I execute:

A new light breaks upon the earth,

A new world is born.

The things that were promised are fulfilled.



MOTHER INDIA

MONTHLY REVIEW OF CULTURE

Vol. IX **No. 2**

"Great is Truth and it shall prevail"

CONTENTS

UNPUBLISHED POEMS OF SRI AUROBINDO

EVOLUTION

ALL is not finished in the Unseen's decree !
A mind beyond our mind demands our ken ;
A life of unimagined harmony
Awaits, concealed, the grasp of unborn men.

The crude beginnings of the lifeless earth
And mindless stirrings of the plant and tree
Prepared our thought ; thought for a godlike birth
Broadens the mould of our mortality.

A might no human will or force could gain,
A knowledge seated in eternity,
A joy[1] beyond our struggle and our pain
Is this earth-hampered creature's destiny.

O Thou who climbedst to mind from the dull stone,
Turn to the miracled summits yet unwon.

UNREALISED THINGS*

Our godhead calls us in unrealised things.
Asleep in the wide fields of destiny,
A world guarded by Silence' rustling wings
Sheltered their fine impossibility.

But part, but quiver the cerulean gates,
Close splendours look into our dreaming eyes,
We bear proud deities and magnificent fates ;
Faces and hands come near from Paradise.

What shone thus far above is here in us ;
Bliss unattained our future's birthright is ;
Beauty of our dim soul is amorous ;
We are the heirs of infinite widenesses.

The impossible is the hint of what shall be,
Mortal the door to immortality.

[1] bliss.
* Title not in the original (*Editor*).

ON THE MOUNTAINS*

Immense retreats of silence and of gloom,
Hills of a sterile grandeur, rocks that sublime
In bareness seek the blue sky's infinite room
With their coeval snows untouched by Time !

I seek your solemn spaces ! Let me at last
Forgotten of thought through days immemorable
Voiceless and needless keep your refuge vast,
Growing into the peace in which I dwell.

For like that Soul unmade you seem to brood
Who sees all things emerge but none creates,
Watching the ages from His solitude,
Lone, unconcerned, remote. You to all Fates

Offer an unmoved heart and therefore abide,
Who seek not, act not, strive not nor rebel.
Like you, who are may grow like Him, as wide,†
Mere, uncreative, imperturbable.

MORCUNDEYA*

(A Fragment)

O Will of God that stirrest and the Void
Is peopled, men have called thee force, upbuoyed
Upon whose wings the stars borne round and round
Need not one hour of rest ; light, form and sound
Are marks of thy eternal movement. We
See what thou choosest, but 'tis thou we see.

I Morcundeya whom the worlds release,
The Seer,—but it is God alone who sees !—
Soar up above the bonds that hold below
Man to his littleness, lost in the show
Perrenial which the senses round him build ;
I find them out and am no more beguiled.
But ere I rise, ere I become the vast
And luminous Infinite and from the past
And future utterly released forget
These beings who themselves their bonds create,
Once I will speak and what I see declare.
The rest is God. There's silence everywhere.

My eyes within were opened and I saw.

* Early poem.

† [1] To be like you, grow like Him, silent, wide, [2] To be like Him/you were happiness, silent, wide, [3] Such might we be perhaps, as silent, wide, [4] There is a soul in us, as silent, wide,

IN TUNE WITH SRI AUROBINDO

I

THE Integral Yoga is a matter of all or nothing. Not that the Guru rejects partial offerings : whatever movement is towards the Divine is welcome and can be made the starting-point for a larger gesture. The Grace answers to even the smallest sincere gift. But its call is towards more and more, a new starting-point each moment. And if to this insatiable call a deaf ear is turned, then in terms of the Integral Yoga it is as if nothing was done.

The call is insatiable not only because the Grace wants the whole human to be surrendered to the Divine but also because it wants the whole Divine to be lavished on the human. Surely, since the very nature of Grace is to exceed mere tally and equation, its self-lavishing is always greater than the aspirant's self-surrender. Yet the aspirant cannot receive and retain it unless he holds up to it a being that increasingly widens and deepens and grows a less and less partial offering.

In the integral offering that has to be made in the Integral Yoga, one understands fairly well the need of entire detachment from the non-divine and of absolute love for the Supreme and of perfect service to the Master. What is not often understood is the way of action in the midst of the world where the Supreme's manifestation has to take place, the way of dealing with the humans amongst whom the Divine has put us. There are two extremes into which we are likely to fall. One is the position that the mere practice of goodness is spiritual. No doubt, every movement that loosens one's self-centredness is a help to spirituality. But it is not till the ego which is one's common centre is replaced by the true soul and the universal Self that spirituality is established. Otherwise all that happens is a subtilisation of the ego, a diffusion of it in the place of a concentration,—a state in which it is at times more difficult to detect and therefore more difficult to outgrow, more liable to induce a self-haloing complacency and prevent the release into true Light. A constant remembrance of the Divine, a direct life-offering to the Supreme, a conscious motive and *élan* beyond mere goodness, an unremitting cry to the Master Light to manifest its own will in all human relations : this is spirituality in action.

The other extreme cares little for how we act among men. We feel that all our capacity of sweetness is to be exercised only with the Guru and that

it does not matter how we behave with others. We tell ourselves : "The incarnate Divine is our concern : nobody else is of any importance and what helps us in Yoga is simply the way we love and serve the Master. It is of no moment whether we are just and generous and calm and helpful to others." Here a great truth is shaded off into a great falsehood. Even apart from the fact that the Divine who is incarnate is also hidden in all beings and requires from the secret station there a fineness and largeness of attitude and action, we have here an oblivion of two ingredients of the Integral Yoga.

First, this is a Yoga of manifestation no less than realisation. Not only is the Supreme to be centrally reached : the Supreme is also to be radiated to the farthest peripheries of the world. The innermost soul has to look forth and touch the outermost : all crudity of attitude, all meanness of action in our dealings with earth's creatures would cut across the ultimate aim of this Yoga.

Secondly, it is a delusion that one can divide oneself into parts and be always fine and wide with the Guru without practising fineness and wideness twenty-four hours of the day. Of course, the Divine is our concern, but can we ever hope to love and serve the Divine wholly if in some part of our being, in some field of our activity we tolerate the crude and the mean ? As long as the soul remains somehow in force during the hours in the sanctuary we may be able to exclude the unregenerate movements from our relations with the Master. But it is not only the soul that has to be offered : the soul must lead the rest of the being to the sanctuary. And when the rest is touched by the Divine and called upon to co-operate, then if it has not trained itself to be fine and large outside the sanctuary it will tend to be resentful, angry, jealous, self-seeking with the Divine as it has been with the human. The soul's sweetness and light may fail to curb and convert it if that sweetness and that light have not been accustomed to do so everywhere and at all times. Resentment, anger, jealousy, self-seeking on any occasion can be a secret seed of the same ego-expression against the Supreme. In the Integral Yoga, with its stroke on each part for response to the Supreme, the total self-offering is not possible unless one takes to heart Sri Aurobindo's command : "Always behave as if the Mother was looking at you ; because she is indeed always present."

SYRINX

SURREALIST POETRY

Shed not tears of grief, Creeper of the glade !
Shall Heaven's salver simmering with fragrance
Cast the unsleeping beam of the New Revelation, as the rosy tint from a brush,
Upon the counter of the hardened miser that has fallen from the Path ?

Shall the branded arm of the harlot wear bracelets that have the ring[1] of the whitest snows ?
Shall the march of divine destinies, revealed in the memory of the spotless Beyond,
Seek the gradient of a Beauty reeking with the cry of passion ?
In silence the Creeper in her ascetic bareness closes her eyes, vacant and tawny[2]...

Out of the dream of the Night the Artisan has risen in his ecstasy,
And with the jet-black beauty of the benign and peerless divinity
He sets out in lotus hue the arbour of Life[3]
That reaches out to the far heaven, touches the very front of Dawn.

JYOTIRMAYI
(Translated by Nolini Kanta Gupta)

Behold ! From where comes this unknown Creeper
Along the woodland path annointed by the rising Moon ?
All pain she has tinged with the blue of Heart-stream,
She has made Heaven unveil and break out into murmuring billows.

The magic of her compassion flowers in her hand,
And the thunder-roar that booms the world's end is hushed suddenly;

[1] that enshrine the echo.
[2] She, in her ascetic bareness, has closed her eyes, stationed in the vacant tawny spaces.
[3] He sets out in lotus hue the creeper-glade.

In the morn that is the death of the naked skeleton
She stalks over the world, a gathered Fire, voicing her approach.
The Dark One has put on a golden garland,
And on her delicate forehead burns the flame of red sandal—
She, the Eternal Memory, from within the forgetfulness of earth's depths
Kindles the first spark of the Word born of the churning.

The eye of the waxing Moon at night-end
Pours out of its blue the golden gleam of a dark collyrium.

NIRODBARAN
(*Translated by Nolini Kanta Gupta*)

NIRODBARAN: I don't know what this is driving at.

SRI AUROBINDO: I am afraid I don't know either. You have suddenly shot beyond Mallarmé and everybody else and landed yourself into Surrealism of the most advanced kind. Such a line as বিবসনা কঙ্কালের মরণ-প্রভাতে[1] would make any surrealist poet's heart wild with joy. I think, however, you should put up a petition to your Inspiration to rein in this gallop towards and beyond the latest Modernism and give us something less progressive and startling.

The only lines I can make something out of are the first two (the creeper of the unknown new life in the woodland path of the moonrise, spiritual opening—অভিষিক্ত[2] with the moonbeams, I suppose) and the third quatrain which is rather remarkable. The Energy (secret in the physical centres) accepted (?) the golden Garland (the Garland of the Truth) and She (this Kundalini Shakti) who carries in her the eternal Memory of all things secreted in the apparent Inconscience kindles from the oblivious depths of Earth (the material Nature) the first lightning of the Word of the churning of the Depths i.e. the first bringing up of all that is concealed and undelivered in the consciousness of Matter. It is a very cryptic and also very significant poetic description of the working of the closed-up Energy in the physical centre when it wakes. The couplet *might* mean that the white-blue moonlight (spiritual light) pours the golden Script of the Truth from its eyes (power of vision). The rest *may* mean a preliminary consequence of the opening in which the wave of Manifestation of Paradise comes and brightens up the anguish of the Man of Sorrows in you with a stream of soul-blue, with the result that the tempest is stopped, there is the day of death for the confounded Naked Skeleton (of the dead old

[1] In translation: "In the morn that is the death of the naked skeleton."
[2] "Annointed."

Adam in you) and a concentrated Fire pervades everything. After which, as I have said, the Yoga Shakti uncoils in your physical centres and starts serious business.

Great Scott ! I think I have unexpectedly solved the riddle.

Well, if my prophetic soul has rightly interpreted it, it is not 'mixed up' but it is recklessly audacious in its whirlingness of cryptic images. Spiritual surrealism with a vengeance.

17-1-1937

NIRODBARAN: I am a little disappointed. Every time there is any difficulty in expression, transition etc., etc., you escape always by using the word 'surrealist'. What's this blooming surrealism now ? At times I have to make a foolish face to people when I can't understand my own expressions.

SRI AUROBINDO: Why foolish ? Make a mystic face and say "It means too much for owls." The difficulty is that you all want exact intellectual meanings for these things. A meaning there is, but it can't always be fitted with a right and neat intellectual cap...My 'surrealist' is a joke but not a depreciatory one.

Surrealism is a new phrase invented only the other day and I am not really sure what it conveys. According to some it is a dream-poetry making[1] a deeper truth, a deeper reality than the surface reality. I dont know if this is the whole theory or only one side or phase of the practice. Baudelaire as a surrealist is a novel idea, nobody ever called him that before. Mallarmé, Verlaine, and others used to be classed as impressionist poets, sometimes as symbolists. But now the surrealists seem to claim descent from these poets.

NIRODBARAN: People think I am just rioting in fancy and meaninglessness —with no real transitions from one part to another. Would you say I am expressing dreams from what we call the vital plane—dreams without link or reason ?

SRI AUROBINDO: This is the gibe of the orthodox school of critics or readers—certainly the surrealists would not agree with it—they would claim they have got at a deeper line of truth and meaning than the intellectual.

Transitions are not there of a mental logic. Not palpable on the surface but palpable to a deeper vision.

How do you say that vital dreams have no link or reason ? They have their own coherence, only the physical mind cannot always get at the clue by following which the coherence would unroll itself. For that matter the se-

[1] Doubtful reading (*Ed.*).

quences of physical existence are coherent to us only because we are accustomed to it and our reason has made up a meaning out of it. But subject it to the view of a different consciousness and it becomes an incoherent phantasmagoria. That is how the Mayavadins or Schopenhauer would speak of it, the former say deliberately that dream-sequences and life-sequences stand on the same footing, only they have another structure. Each is real and consequent to itself, though neither, they would say, is real or consequent in very truth.

Q: Could you say something about Nirodbaran's poetry? Obscurity and unintelligibility seem to be its very essence!

SRI AUROBINDO: Nirod's poetry (what he writes now) is from the dream-consciousness, no doubt about that. My labelling him as surrealist is partly—though not altogether—a joke. How far it applies depends on what the real aim and theory of the surrealist school may be. Obscurity and unintelligibility are not the essence of any poetry and—except for unconscious or semi-conscious humourists like the Dadaists—cannot be its aim or principle. True dream-poetry (let us call it so for the nonce) has and must always have a meaning and a coherence. But it may very well be obscure or seem meaningless to those who take their stand on the surface or "waking" mind and accept only its links and logic. Dream-poetry is usually full of images, visions, symbols that seek to strike at things too deep for the ordinary means of expression. Nirod does not deliberately make his poems obscure; he writes what comes through from the source he has tapped and does not interfere with its flow by his own mental volition. In many modernist poets there may be labour and a deliberate posturing, but it is not so in his case. I interpret his poems because he wants me to do it, but I have always told him that an intellectual rendering narrows the meaning—it has to be seen and felt, not thought out. Thinking it out may give a satisfaction and an appearance of mental logicality, but the deeper sense and sequence can only be apprehended by an inner sense. I myself do not try to find out the meaning of his poems, I try to feel what they mean in vision and experience and then render into mental terms. This is a special kind of poetry and has to be dealt with according to its kind and nature. There is a sequence, a logic, a design in them, but not one that can satisfy the more rigid law of the logical intelligence.[1]

12-2-1937

---

[1] This passage as well as the next letter has been published in *Letters of Sri Aurobindo*, Third Series.

Q: I am sending a number of points for consideration. Please shed some light.

SRI AUROBINDO: About your points regarding surrealism:

(1) If the surrealist dream-experiences are flat, pointless or ugly, it must be because they penetrate only as far as the "subconscious" physical and "subconscious" vital dream layers which are the strata nearest to the surface. Dream consciousness is a vast world in which there are a multitude of provinces and kingdoms, but ordinary dreamers for the most part penetrate consciously only to these first layers which belong to what may properly be called the subconscient belt. When they pass into deeper sleep regions, their recording surface dream-mind becomes unconscious and no longer gives any transcript of what is seen and experienced there; or else in coming back these experiences of the deeper strata fade away and are quite forgotten before one reaches the waking state. But when there is a stronger dream-capacity, or the dream-state becomes more conscious, then one is aware of these deeper experiences and can bring back a transcript which is sometimes a clear record, sometimes a hieroglyph, but in either case possessed of a considerable interest and significance.

(2) It is only the subconscious belt that is chaotic in its dream sequences; for its transcriptions are fantastic and often mixed, combining a jumble of different elements; some play with impressions from the past, some translate outward touches pressing on the sleep-mind; most are fragments from successive dream-experiences that are not really part of one connected experience—as if a gramophone record were to be made up of snatches of different songs all jumbled together. The vital dreams even in the subconscious range are often coherent in themselves and only seem incoherent to the waking intelligence because the logic and law of their sequences is different from the logic and law which the physical reason imposes on the incoherences of physical life. But if one gets the guiding clue and if one has some dream-experience and dream-insight, then it is possible to seize the link of the sequences and make out the significance, often very profound or very striking, both of the detail and of the whole. Deeper in, we come to perfectly coherent dreams recording the experience of the inner vital and inner mental planes; there are also true psychic dreams—the latter usually are of a great beauty. Some of these mental or vital plane dream-experiences, however, are symbolic, very many in fact, and can only be understood if one is familiar with or gets the clue to the symbols.

(3) It depends on the nature of the dreams. If they are of the right kind, they need no aid of imagination to be converted into poetry. If they are significant, imagination in the sense of a free use of mental invention might injure their truth and meaning—unless of course the imagination is of the nature of an inspired vision coming from the same plane and filling out or reconstructing the recorded experience so as to bring out the Truth held in it more fully than the dream-transcript could do; for a dream-record is usually compressed and often hastily selective.

(4) The word "psyche" is used by most people to mean anything belonging to the inner mind, vital or physical,—though the true psyche is different from these things. Poetry does come from these sources or even from the superconscient sometimes; but it does not come usually through the form of dreams —it comes either through word-vision or through conscious vision and imagery whether in a fully waking or an inward-drawn state : the latter may go so far as to be a state of samadhi—*swapna samādhi*. In all these cases it is vision rather than dream that is the imaging power. Dreams also can be made a material for poetry; but everyone who dreams or has visions or has a flow of images cannot by that fact be a poet. To say that a predisposition and discipline are needed to bring them to light in the form of written words is merely a way of saying that it is not enough to be a dreamer, one must have the poetic faculty and some training—unless the surrealists mean by this statement something else than what the words naturally signify. What is possible, however, is that by going into the inner (what is usually called the subliminal) consciousness —this is not really subconscious but a veiled or occult consciousness—or getting somehow into contact with it, one not originally a poet can awake to poetic inspiration and power. No poetry can be written without access to some source of Inspiration. Mere recording of dreams or images or even visions could never be sufficient, unless it is a poetic inspiration that records them with the right use of words and rhythm bringing out their poetic substance. On the other hand, I am bound to admit that among the records of dream-experiences even from people unpractised in writing I have met with a good many that read like a brilliant and coloured poetry which does hit—satisfying Housman's test —the solar plexus. So much I can concede to the surrealist theory; but if they say on that basis that all can with a little training turn themselves into poets —well, one needs a little more proof before one can accept so wide a statement.

13-2-1937

A DIAMOND IS BURNING UPWARD

A diamond is burning upward
In the roofless chamber walled
By the ivory mind ;
An orb entrancèd glows
Where earth-storm never blows—
But the two wide eyes are blind
To its virgin soar behind
Their ruby and emerald.

The one pure bird finds rest
In the crescent moon of a nest
Which infinite boughs upbear...
Flung out on phantom air
In a colour-to-colour race
Yet never ending their quest,
The two birds dream they fly
Though fixed in the narrow sky
Of a futile human face.

16-2-1938 K. D. SETHNA

Sri Aurobindo's Comment :

"It sounds very surrealistic. Images and poetry very beautiful, but significance and connections are cryptic. Very attractive, though."

AGNI JATAVEDAS

O smile of heaven locked in a seed of light—
O music burning through the heart's dumb rock—
O beast of beauty with the golden beard—
O lust-consumer in the virgin's bed—
Come with thy myriad eyes that face all truth,
Thy myriad arms equal to each desire !
Shatter or save, but fill this gap of gloom :
Rise from below and call thy far wealth down—
A straining supplicant of naked silver,
A jar of dream, a crystal emptiness
Draining through a mighty mouth above the mind
Some ageless alchemy of liquid sun !
Or bind us like a python-sleep of snow
Whose glory grips the flesh and leaves it numb
For soul to gather its forgotten fire,
A purple power no eagle's wing-waft knew,
A soar that makes time-towers a lonely fret
And all a futile victory the stars !
Work thy strange will, but load our gaze no more
With unexplorable freedoms of black air,
An infinite rapture veiled by infinite pain...
Lightning of Truth, God's lava passion—come !

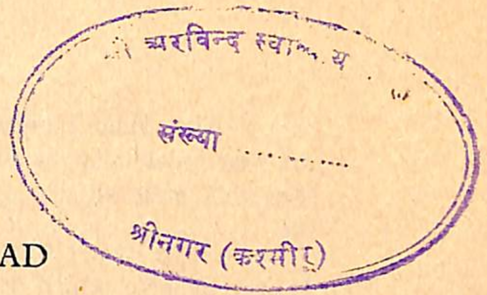
14-5-1937

K. D. Sethna

Sri Aurobindo's Comment :

"Very fine poetry throughout, not exactly 'surrealistic', at least not in the current sense, but occult in its vision and sequences. I have marked the most powerful lines.[1]"

[1] I 1-3, 9-13, 16, 21.



MANDUKYA UPANISHAD

AN ENGLISH VERSION, WITH SOME NOTES AND A COMMENTARY

Here is an unfolding[1] of the Immutable who is all and whose name is OM[2]. Whatsoever has been, is now and is yet to be is OM. Even that which is other than all this and beyond time is no other than OM.

2. All this is Brahman[3] the Supreme, and the Supreme is Atman[4] the true Self of all and this Self is fourfold.[5]

3. Seven-limbed, nineteen-mouthed, conscious of the external, the enjoyer of the gross whose field is the waking life—the first is Vaishwanara the Male Universal.[6]

4. Seven-limbed, nineteen-mouthed, conscious of the internal, the reveller in the subtle whose native dwelling is in Dream—the second is Taijasa, the Ever-radiant.[7]

5. Poised on the plane of deep sleep where the sleeper craves not for pleasure nor sees any dream, unified in substance and concentrated[8] in knowledge, the Being of Delight[9] who tastes the rapture transcendent and whose mouth is consciousness—the third is Prajna the Master of Wisdom.[10]

6. This is the Lord of all, their omniscient indweller and controller, this is the womb of all—the cause of their creation and also their destruction.

7. Neither internal nor external nor even midway between the two neither the concentrated Knowledge nor world-consciousness nor yet unconsciousness ; invisible and unrelated, unseizable and featureless ; beyond all thought and speech ; the sheer Self luminous in very essence of singlehood and devoid of deceptive mutations ; the Peaceful, the Blissful, the One who is non-dual[11]—this is called the fourth, it is He who is the Self,[12] it is He[13] who is to be realised.

8. This Self is the Immutable whose name is OM : his forms are its syllables—the forms of the one are indeed the syllables of the other—A, U, M,[14]

9. The Male Universal, Vaishwanara, whose field is the waking life is the first syllable A, the syllable which pervades all and is primal. He who realises this finds all his longings fulfilled and stands out foremost.

10. The Ever-radiant, Taijasa, who dwells in Dream is the second syllable U, the syllable which augments all and is in-between. He who realises this increases his command of knowledge and becomes equal to everything nor ever is born in his house anyone ignorant of Brahman.

11. The Master of Wisdom, Prajna, poised on the plane of deep sleep, is the third syllable M, the syllable which plumbs all and is final. He who realises this becomes the all-measurer and the passage into the ultimate.

12. OM is the full and unsyllabified[15] fourth—the unconditioned[16], the immutability never affected[17], the Beatitude which is the One without duality. He who realises[18] this, he by whom this is realised, enters through his own supreme Self the supreme Self of all.

(*With the help of several translations as well as of a reference to the original*)

NOTES

(1) *Upavyākhyanam* : meaning an exposition which brings out the hidden significance. The term may be taken as a link-word indicating the apposition of the second to the first thought in the same verse. For what is implicit in His unmanifest being, the Divine makes explicit in the movement of the universe in Space and Time.

(2) OM is spoken of as *Akshara* which means "immutable" as well as "fixed letter or sound" : the double sense, implied also in verse 8, seems intended to convey that this cosmic movement bears in its very play of variations the suggestion of a supracosmic Constant of which it is an expression.

(3) The term meant in the Vedas the sacred Word of Inspiration. The larger sense of the Word as Logos underlay it, for the inspirations received by the Godward-turned mentality were regarded as deriving from the same source as the energy of the hidden Idea sustaining the universe. In the Upanishads it means clearly the supreme Consciousness which expresses itself in the cosmos.

(4) The word means That of which everything is a self-expression : hence the true Self of all, dwelling equally in the universe and the individual.

(5) *Chatuspāt* : literally "four-footed". In the language of Vedic and Vedantic philosophy a foot signifies a step or grade in the hierarchy of being

—a level, plane, status or organised form of consciousness, one of the many "vyahritis" or worlds of manifestation, and even an unmanifest mode of conscious existence. The three steps of "the wide-spanning Vishnu" which support the supreme Reality are well-known both in the Vedas and in the Upanishads.

(6) "Seven-limbed, nineteen-mouthed" : the seven limbs of the Male Universal, "Vaishwanara", are stated in the Upanishads to be the various parts of the universe: the highest ether is his head, the sun his eyes, the air his breath, the sky his body, water his lower organ and the earth his feet. Vaiswanara represents both the universal and the individual aspects of external Nature, because in Indian thought these two are always looked upon as complementaries implying each other, the macrocosmic and the microcosmic expressions of one and the same underlying reality. The nineteen mouths or avenues and means of expression are (a) the five perceptive senses of sight, audition, taste, smell and touch; (b) the five active senses which operate for speech, locomotion, the seizing of things, ejection and generation; (c) the five aspects of "Prana" the universal Life-Force—"prana", which introduces the universal vitality into the individual and actuates him towards more abundant living; "apana", which leads him to expend his energy and so tend towards death; "samana", which regulates the in-coming and the out-going forces and maintains as far as possible an equilibrium of interchange; "vyana", which distributes the vital energies by a pervasive movement in the system; and "udana", the finest form of all, which serves as the strength of human aspiration towards the Divine and a secret channel of communication between the physical life and the greater life of the Spirit; (d) the fourfold "Antahkarana" or inner instrument of consciousness—"chitta", the basic mind-stuff receptive of the conscious values of stimuli and reactive in sensational and emotional expressions; "manas", the perceptive mind which serves as a subtle sixth sense co-ordinating as well as transcending the ordinary sense-organs in its range of knowledge; "buddhi", the discriminating intelligence-will which is the highest organisation of the ordinary human consciousness; and finally "ahankara", the ego-sense which constitutes the empirical experience of a limited body, life and mind.

(7) "Taijasa" is the consciousness of the subtle and subliminal planes which are behind the world of gross reality dominated by the physical mentality and which have their own refined counterparts in objects and means of experience. The subliminal has planes of life and mind, with a deepmost recess which may be called the plane of soul, the psyche containing the potentialities of the Divine Delight beyond the subtle world.

(8) "Concentrated", because the still inner consciousness in relation to which we are in a condition of dreaming sleep and with which our ordinary mentality, by being insufficiently developed or refined, is unable to keep a contact, is that of the ultra-mental plane proper to the divine Will which creates from the core of all existence and holds in itself the unified aim towards whose fulfilment the whole universe tends. It possesses the truth of things in its integral unity, the truth which works itself out by its own ultra-mental law through the subtle and the gross manifestations.

(9) The Sanskrit term is *Ānandamaya*, meaning the substance of formative Delight. This Delight is the self-existent beatitude proper to the divine nature which manifests the universe by diffusing itself through the concentrated energy of the causal Will. It is the plane of the free interplay of divine Love where each is in all and all in each, supporting on the one hand the action of diversity-in-unity by which the causal Will creates and on the other the one supreme Conscious Being in which all are all.

(10) The term "Prajna" means, with reference to the context, the consciousness which by its inherent quality is the divine manifested source of all other manifestations of consciousness and so the Lord or "Ishwara" of everything, who in his own being concentrates all the Wisdom and Delight which he looses forth in the act of creation. From his consciousness are derived the two particular modes of internal and external awareness proper to "Taijasa" and "Vaishwanara". The world-consciousness inherent in his very quality of being "Prajnic" or original of all other forms of conscious manifestation is in its supreme pregnancy the unified condition which holds the seed of creation cast by the supernal Delight. All these different shades are brought out in verse 7 which starts to define by a process of elimination the Consciousness which is basic even to that of Prajna and is the very Self-Being which forms the stuff of all Self-Becoming, the extracosmic Immutable out of whom, by a surpassing miracle, proceeds the endless history of the cosmos.

(11) *Advaitam* : It is inaccurate to say that this term denotes That which never manifests multiplicity ; it may, with at least equal propriety, mean That which remains a unity even though manifesting itself under the figure of multiplicity. For the first interpretation lands us unnecessarily in a categorical denial of empirical reality and is even more akin, than the frankly mystical faith of the latter in omnipotence, to a Tertullian "Credo quia absurdum". The second interpretation does not deny empirical reality, but refuses to accept its seeming multiplicity as anything more than a representative device of the supreme consciousness. Anyway, "adwaitam" simply connotes That besides and beyond which there is no other or second, That in which there is nothing that is not in essence its own being.

(12) This peculiar emphasis draws attention to the fact that the fourth state is the acme of the yogic trance of absorption in the Divine, and gives us the Reality in its most ultimate nature, in its last and basic form as distinguished from its three other forms—that is to say, in its fundamental selfhood; but, it must also be remembered, in its fundamental selfhood as experienced under the conditions of the exclusive absorption which usually characterises the deepest trance so that the contents of its realisation are held rather unnaturally *in vacuo*, so to speak. To forget this would be to misunderstand the metaphysics of the Mandukya Upanishad from beginning to end.

(13) The Self or Atman is not only "It" but also "He", because the supreme Essence is self-conscious and self-delighted and, as such, is not merely the impersonal commonalty which is the eternal base of all apparent differences, but the original infinite Person as well, out of whose substance of infinite selfhood all specific formulations are regarded by us as if derived and whose pervading presence seems to be, as another Upanishad says, "verily, a thunderbolt uplifted, for fear of whom the wind blows and the sun shines".

(14) The word OM is in Sanskrit a euphony of three letters which are supposed to be basic to speech and therefore symbolic in their combination as well as separately of the fourfold nature of the World-Logos, "the Word which was in the beginning", in both its spoken and unspoken aspects. Further explanation is given in the commentary.

(15) *Amātra*: "unsyllabified," meaning "undivided", because when A, U, and M are spoken as OM, one single sound is produced, symbolic of the single yet fourfold truth of being.

(16) *Avyavahārya*: translated "unrelated" in verse 7, means, in full, existing without communication and commerce with anything, free from the necessities and limitations of a changing existence, because in its essentiality Atman manages to remain unsullied by the ignorant relations and vicissitudes proper to phenomena. It is not even relative to knowledge in the mental sense, for, as Yajnavalkya asks in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, "how can one know the ultimate Knower in oneself except by the very fact and realisation of being the Knower?"

(17) *Prapanchêpsham*: translated "devoid of deceptive mutations" in verse 7. In Indian philosophy the state of being engrossed in the play of multiplicity to the forgetfulness of the basic unity of the Self is called the Ignorance. But Atman is said to be free of the bewildering influence of the mobile world of phenomena and, being undeluded and unperturbed by changes, is in a state of illumined peace. There is no suggestion of sterile immobility in the pure Sanskrit expression: to see it there one needs to be prejudiced enough

to confuse calm with passive impotence. The Upanishads, as a rule, do not make a graveyard and call it peace. How even the Mandukya does not really contradict what it has itself said at the beginning—namely, that OM's transcendence of spatio-temporal activity none the less comprehends it—the commentary will elucidate.

(18) The term *Veda* which is used in the concluding phrase of each of the last four verses does not signify the act of mere mental knowing. It means, originally, realisation by the identification of consciousness with the object, a secret rapport with and insight into the truth of appearance. So when the universal Vaishwanara is known thus by the individual by means of yoga, all desires and hankerings cease, because the ego-limitation is transcended and the whole universe is possessed in the one cosmic consciousness and does not require to be possessed physically. Similarly, the realisation of the universal Taijasa leads to unity with the inner nature of the whole cosmic movement, an identification of the individual's purpose with the universal play of subjectivity which transmits through an apparent clash of individual centres the fiat of the omniscient: through this inward sympathy the whole organic life of the body in both its gross and subtle aspects becomes illumined with the sense of the divinity which is behind the subjective plane. The realisation of Prajna the Transcendent who is the universal Lord makes one at the same time partake of the creative Origin beyond the becomings of the universe and be a conscious centre of the macrocosmic form of one's own microcosmic divinity: hence a conscious measure of all things, possessed of their innermost truth and supporting principle of guidance. Lastly, the realisation of the supreme Self awakes one to the ultimate Essence, and leads to the completest identification possible becaus əthe Upanishad c object and goal of realisation is the Self of one's self.

"Adhyetā"

(*To be continued*)

POEMS

SUPRAMENTAL MANIFESTATION

LEAVING Her self-tranced far-off gnostic peaks
The Mother of Might leaps out in resolute play,
The all-efficient golden Light now seeks
Authoritatively Its perpetual stay.
In man's discretion no confidence does she lay
Nor in the ignorance of his mindless freaks,
With the power paramount of God she speaks:
"I will the Sun's home in dense faithless clay."

She works not alone from behind mystic veils.
She has pitched her pavilion in the heart of earth,
The grip of Her force is firm on all human scales—
This new god-dawn is the reason of Her birth.
Out of the world of bickerings grief-torn
The God-pledged world of harmony is born.

HAR KRISHAN SINGH

MIND-EXPANSE

SLEEP, overwhelming force of sleep is hushing me;,
There is a clear call to retire.
Slow cool breeze blows through a mind of mystery;
Nerves are ringing to the rhythm of a celestial lyre.

Darkness, all-pervading darkness spreads in me
My mind is caught in some unearthly spell;
My vision sinks in emptiness, yet inward eyes can see
A curtain raised that covered heaven from hell.
Silence, a mystic quietude swallows me,
All movements of the mind subside.
Is it the abysmal void of the Nirvanic Sea ?
Or stillness of the Soul where the Gods reside ?

PRATAP TRIVEDI

THOUGHTS ON ART

Art is a living harmony and beauty that must be expressed in all the movements of existence. This manifestation of beauty and harmony is part of the Divine realisation upon earth, perhaps even its greatest part.

THE MOTHER

TRUE form is grace. The act of pure creation is an act of grace to the thing created. The Divine Grace forms Itself into World, the grace of the soul into its nature and the creating one becomes the instrument through which it manifests.

Grace is the influence of the Divine Power in the soul of him who is prepared to receive it. Grace is the descent of the supreme Spirit into the mute, the opened consciousness of the creature. Grace is the redeeming answer to faith, aspiration and surrender. Grace follows the deep call of the heart as light follows the unfolding blossom.

But no imperfect instrument permits a perfected work. If silence and opening are sufficient to receive the power, perfection in Time demands a purified nature. An own will in the instrument deforms and distorts what has been received. Lifeless and dark, the form walls in its meaning. The secret of the creating one reveals itself in his renunciation, in the joy to surrender his own being ever more deeply and purely to the power of grace that through him presses towards formation.

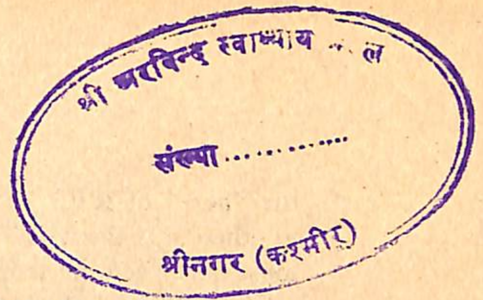
Art is formative grace. The divine power of the heart, of the great consciousness, fulfils itself in the play of its creation. Art is Nature fulfilling herself, the becoming being of the Divine significance at which the form looses itself into Infinity.

Works of art are forms of the soul, settings for its delight, mirrors of its glorified movement. They are the living symbols of the great Spirit, the bodies of His Will, are space around His Eternity.

And man is called upon to be an artist, formateur at the formless, preserver of things transitory, perfector of the unperfected. His becoming must be the transparent garment of his luminous being, his creating a pure execution of the eternal Will in his soul. Let it be his endeavour to become art, artist and the work of art. For through him God will raise Nature, in him He will change the lowest into the highest that He may with him perfect the world.

(*To be continued*)

JOBST MÜHLING



IS OUR CHRONOLOGY FOR ANCIENT INDIA CORRECT?

Some Criticisms and Suggestions

7

DOUBT has been expressed on the determination by us, in our previous article, of the meaning of the word "Here" occurring twice in Asoka's R.E.XIII. We took the word to mean "At Pāṭaliputra". As the first occurrence is in the phrase "Here and on all the bordering dominions", we are told: "The contrast is clearly between the bordering dominions (*Aṁta*) and Asoka's own dominion: so 'here' can only mean his empire and not his capital. Then the 600 yojanas have to be counted from his borders."

This interpretation sounds reasonable in itself, but many things in Asoka may depend on the *ensemble* of his inscriptions as well as on a whole passage in a particular inscription rather than on one sentence. We have argued that when we look beyond the sentence concerned in R.E.XIII, it cannot but involve Pāṭaliputra. And our general position is that, since Asoka by the Girnar version of R.E.V has once definitely made "here" signify Pāṭaliputra, we should not in any instance think of another interpretation till we fail to make Pāṭaliputra plausible. The contrast we have seen in that sentence of R.E.XIII is between the empire's government-centre and the empire's peripheries on which the foreign dominions stood. *Aṁta*, strictly speaking, connotes borders or extremities. "Borders" is the important concept involved. Jules Bloch even translates the phrase "Hida cha shaveshu cha amteshu" by a French turn which has to be Englished: "Here and on all the borders".[1] So our contrast is quite pertinent. In addition, we may take "hida" and "amta" to represent the starting-point and the ending-point of the spread of the Dhamma, as if to say "Beginning with my own capital and terminating in all the lands on my frontiers".

A point in favour of a uniform interpretation of "here" is that the moment we admit the possibility of an interpretation varying from context to context we land ourselves in uncertainty and controversy. Different scholars have held different opinions about one and the same "here" : thus, to Mookerji

[1] *Les Inscriptions d'Asoka*, p. 125, quoted in a translation in A.L. Basham's *The Wonder that was India*, p. 54.

the "here" of R.E.I is Pāṭaliputra, to Bhandarkar it is the royal household, to others it is the whole empire. But if even acute scholars cannot agree, what must have been the state of mind of average Indians reading their great king's announcements ? It is difficult to believe that Asoka left them in doubt : either his "here"s clearly signified different things or they signified an identical place no matter how unclearly. If he intended a diversity of meaning he was under an obligation to be exact in his indication : if he was known to have intended the same place he could be as careless as he liked. The very fact that scholars can differ shows his carelessness and this carelessness is, paradoxically, the proof that there was an understanding between him and his subjects. And, after all, what could be more natural than to understand by "here" the place where Asoka resided and from which he sent forth his edicts ? The place where he resided can be taken either as his own palace or as his capital. The royal household seems too limited a centre to serve as a uniform point of reference : the imperial capital is certainly a more befitting "here".

However, if we suppose "here" in R.E.XIII to mean by any chance Asoka's empire, our thesis that the kings whose territories extended 600 yojanas away were not Greek does not necessarily fall. Historical circumstances permit us to start counting 600 yojanas from Asoka's frontier with safety from the Greek identifications. First, the yojana which, though always variable, is commonly equated to 8 or 9 miles was in the ancient time of the *Arthaśāstra* about 4 ½ miles and can therefore be taken, as Monier-Williams' *Dictionary* allows, to have been 2 ½ miles in the time of Asoka which most scholars now consider more ancient than the *Arthaśāstra*'s: thus we do not need to go very far away. Secondly, in both R.E.II and R.E. XIII, Amtiyoka alone is called a Yona raja by Asoka: the other four kings are not given the epithet Yona. Though we may be disposed to regard the epithet as understood, we are not strictly obliged to consider them Yavana kings: thus the restriction of the Yavana dominions by Indian tradition to merely 1500 miles from Pāṭaliputra cannot prevent us from going beyond Amtiyoka and that region and cannot make our going end up either in Greek territory or in territory forbidden by an interpretation which attributes non-Greek nationality to all the five kings. Thirdly, if we go from the north-west frontier, through Afghanistan, to the territory beyond the Hindu Kush mountains, we can cover by 1500 miles of winding road from Asoka's north-west a terrain which could very easily have been the field of his missionary activity. For, R. C. Majumdar[1] tells us :

[1] *The Age of Imperial Unity*, pp. 635- 38.

"We have evidence to show that Buddhism, and along with it Indian culture, was spread among the Parthians, the Yueh-chi, the Sogdians and various other peoples of Central Asia before the beginning of the Christian era. Even the Sassanians of the third century A.D. regarded Bactriana as virtually an Indian country and the Oxus a river of Buddhists and the Brāhmanas. The Greek writers always cite Bactriana with India and state that thousands of Brāhmanas and *Samanas*...reside there. The recent explorations in Chinese Turkestān have revealed the existence of a large number of flourishing cities with rich sanctuaries.... The main road proceeded along the valley of the Kabul river and reached the Hindu Kush mountains through Purushapura (Peshāwar), Nagarahāra (Jalālābād), Bāmiyān and other cities. Beyond the Hindu Kush lay Bāhlīka (Bactriana, modern Balkh). From this region three well-known roads led to the Tarim basin.... The Tarim basin...is popularly known as Chinese Turkestān, and corresponds to the modern province of Sinkiang...about 900 miles long from east to west and about 330 miles from north to south at its widest part.... Two roads passing along its northern and southern fringes led from the west to China.... Along the southern route there were Indian colonies at Shule or Śailadeśa (Kāshgar), So-Khiu or Chokkuka (Yarkand), Khota*m*na (Khotān), and also at Somoko, Niya, Dandān-Oilik, Endere, Lou-lan, Rawak and Miran; and along the northern route at Po-lu-Kia or Bharuka (Aqsu district, near Uch-Turfān), Kuchi (modern Kucha), Yen-ki (or Yen-chi) or Agni-deśa (modern Qara Shahr), and Turfān, in addition to various other localities.... Buddhism was the prevailing religion of all these localities."

A matter of further interest is that Khotān, which "seems to be a particularly important centre of Indian colonisation", is said in Tibetan tradition to have had its royal dynasty founded by Kustana, the son of Asoka, and in other Buddhist traditions to have been colonised and ruled by Kuṇāla, another of Asoka's sons.[1] As Majumdar says, "we need not attach much importance to these attempts to associate the ruling family of Khotān with the great Maurya dynasty", but we must think that it migrated from India and there would be nothing wrong in thinking also that Asoka's missionaries went to this place or even that Indian colonies from most probably the north-west frontier had been established there no less than in other places prior to Asoka's day, with the result that their kings' names could have some resemblance to Indian or Perso-Indian ones. The names in Central-Asian documents of supposedly post-Asokan date are either purely Indian such as Bhima, Baṅgusena, Śitaka, Upajiva, Vijita-Si*m*ha, Suvarṇapushpa, Haradeva, Chandrārjuna or else look

[1] *The Age of Imperial Unity*, p. 640.

like Indian adaptations such as Aṅgacha, Kushanasena etc.[1] The Puranic tradition[2] about the ancient Druhyu dynasty disappearing from India because its members migrated to the north and became rulers over territories inhabited by Mlechchhas would seem to point to a pre-Asokan connection of India with Central Asia. And we may note too that not only the peoples called Paradas (Parthians) and Bahlikas (Bactrians) but also those called Sakas, Tusharas (Kushanas) and Hunas who were inhabitants of Central Asia according to our historians are mentioned in the old Indian books as the peoples who came originally from India proper to make their home on this country's north-west and then sent out from there migrations further north and north-west, much before Asoka's day.

Though we cannot say anything for certain, all that we know justifies us in not being in the least discomfited if we are forced to count 600 yojanas from Asoka's north-west border instead of from Pāṭaliputra. To put the beginning of India's connection with Central Asia very early is more reasonable than to hold in the teeth of all evidence to the contrary that Asoka was a contemporary of Antiochus Theos and spread his Dhamma in the domains of the post-Alexandrine Macedonian kings.

The anti-Puranic argument from Asoka's edicts cannot by any means be saved from being broken. And if it is broken, we cannot expect the rest of the case for the current chronology to stand. But as each part of it claims independent strength of one sort or another we must give it a fair trial. The Junagarh inscription of Mahakshatrapa Rudradaman occupies here the centre and we may deal with it at a little length.

Chronologically, everything depends in it on our referring its date, the year 72 of an unspecified era, to the era of 78 A.D. which is usually called the Saka Era. As Rudradaman was a Saka it may seem reasonable to make him observe this era, but there is no compulsion in the mere name Saka of it: the dates of inscriptions and coins of a whole line of acknowledgedly Saka rulers are referred with considerable confidence by modern historians[3] to the era of 57 or 58 B.C. which is called the Vikrama Era. No doubt, this very era is supposed by them to have been founded by the Saka Vonones instead of by the Indian Vikramaditya of popular legend and so an inner rationale appears to be found for its observance by Saka rulers. But the real reason for attributing to them its observance is simply that in the current historical arrangement they occur at a time when the era they are likely to have followed

[1] *The Age of Imperial Unity*, pp. 639, 641, 642.
[2] Vayu Purana, 99.12.
[3] *The Age of Imperial Unity*, pp. 124-125.

is the one of 57 B.C. Non-Sakas are often taken by our historians to have followed this Era or even the Era openly called Saka : all hangs on historical relations. Though the association of Sakas with the Era usually going by their name may look appropriate, it has no inherent inevitability.

The next point is : Is the name "Saka Era" applicable uniquely to the era of 78 A.D. ? We have been told that this era, which has been known from the thirteenth century A.D. as the Era of King Salivahana who was reputed to be the conqueror of a Saka King, had been known before that century as "the era of the Saka King of Kings" and "the era of the coronation of the Saka King." But surely this piece of information, instead of settling matters, should lead us to surmise that, since the name "Saka Era" can connote either the defeat of the Sakas or their victory, there can be more than one Saka Era and that they may differ according as the Sakas triumph or are vanquished. Does 78 A.D. mark the triumph or the defeat ? Our historians seem certain that it marks the triumph. But, side by side with the fact of this era having been called the Saka Era before the thirteenth century, have our historians sufficiently considered another fact which is also well-known to them about 78 A.D. ? R.C. Majumdar[1] states it thus : "The era is not associated with the Sakas for the first five hundred years or more when it is simply called *Varsha*.... The name of the Saka king who founded the era never occurs, even after the lapse of more than a thousand years." How then are we to be certain that when the Saka king was first mentioned the reference was to 78 A.D. and not to some other date forgotten now ? Or else, if by speaking of the Saka Era of 78 A.D. what was intended was an era which, as Majumdar[2] puts it, "was founded by a Saka king or commemorates his accession", how can we be sure that no mistake was committed and that the date concerned did not really mark the destruction of the Sakas ? There are a host of complications. The association of Rudradaman with the Saka Era does not render any reckoning from 78 A.D. inevitable.

And the attempts of our historians to make 78 A.D. an era either founded by a Saka ruler or arising from the continuation of the reckoning of his regnal years by his successors are hardly persuasive. A great "Kushāna" king named Kanishka who is stated to have flourished round about this date and to have been the overlord of the Saka satraps of Western India contemporary with him—the Kshaharata family of Nahapana and the Kardamaka family of Chashtana and Rudradaman—is himself regarded as the Saka king who seera they

[1] *The Age of Imperial Unity*, p. 157.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. xlviii.

followed.[1] Perhaps the difference between the Kushanas and the Sakas is not very great, but to mix them up so facilely does not evoke much confidence and certainly cannot stop us from seeking a more clear, more convincing explanation. But, even apart from the unsatisfactory character of the Kushana-Saka fusion, we can scarcely rest with 78 A.D. as Kanishka's era; for there is a wide diversity of opinion regarding Kanishka's own date and none of the views command general acceptance.[2]

A less arbitrary position is that, though Kanishka started an era in 78 A.D., it came to be famous as "the era of the Saka rulers" because of the continued use of his era even after the decline of the Kushanas by the Western satraps who were originally Kanishka's Saka feudatories.[3] But since Kanishka's date is still a topic of controversy this position too is shaky in one half of it. In its other half it appears to hit part of the truth; for an era to be dubbed Saka should at least be followed by Sakas. The whole truth would be hit if a Saka Era could be regarded as founded by them no less than followed. And some historians do hit the whole truth in a general sense by looking on Chashtana as the founder of the era of 78 A.D. But their correctness in a particular sense depends on whether this era can be deemed the sole Saka Era and, if it cannot, whether it deserves to be distinguished among two or more Saka eras as that of their triumph rather than of their defeat.

All articulate Indian tradition connects 78 A.D. with the Indian king Salivahana, the enemy of the Sakas, just as it connects 57 B.C. with an earlier enemy of theirs, Vikramaditya of Ujjain. The value of this tradition has been well assessed in brief by Majumdar.[4] After remarking that the origin of both these eras is shrouded in obscurity and that naturally many conflicting theories are current on the subject, he writes: "A special importance therefore attaches to the traditional account of the origin of these eras, which, though generally rejected by modern scholars, should not be altogether ignored, so long at least as we cannot arrive at any definite conclusion on the subject." The account need not be accepted in every detail, yet its central purport ought to command attention if it violates no definitely established historical knowledge in our possesseion. The purport with which we are at the moment concerned is: 78 A.D. is the era of the defeat of the Saka king or kings. And it provokes us to search for another Saka era which, without contradicting ascertained history, may answer to the opposite description—namely, Saka victory—commonly applied to 78 A.D.

[1] *The Age of Imperial Unity*, p. xlviii.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 158.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 144, footnote 1.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 154.

Let us glance at the history of the Sakas in relation to India. The modern conception[1] takes them to have reached India from Central Asia ultimately as the result of tribal movements as well as of the aggression of neighbours. In the second century B.C. a particularly violent pressure by the Yueh-chi tribe displaced them from their settlement beyond the Jaxartes and brought them into conflict with the Parthian emperors who were then in possession of eastern Iran. Mithridates II (123-88 B.C.) successfully checked them, so that the tide of their movement flowed finally towards the valley of the Sindhu where a kingdom was founded in the territory designated by the Chinese as Ki-pin and identified by our scholars with a section of the Kaffiristan region. The earliest Saka ruler of Ki-pin known from Chinese sources was between 73 and 33 B.C. The earliest Saka directly ruling over parts of north-western India was Maues (Moa, Moga) between *circa* 20 B.C. and 22 A.D. But "there is no doubt that the Saka occupation of the western part of Northern India was principally the work of the Sakas of eastern Iran.... The relations of the Sakas of the Ki-pin country, mentioned by the Chinese, with India proper as well as with the Sakas of eastern Iran, who occupied wide regions of western and north-western India, are unknown." What we do know about the latter Sakas is that the Iranian province they come from was peopled by their tribe in not only the second century B.C. Already in the inscriptions of Darius we have the mention of three Saka settlements, one of which has been identified by Thomas in Drangiana in the Helmund valley of Iran itself, a place "which afterwards came to be known as Sakastān (the land of the Sakas; Sanskrit *Sakasthāna*; medieval *Sijistān*; modern *Seistān*)." What is further known to us is: "The nomenclature of the early Sakas in India shows an admixture of Scythian, Parthian and Irānian elements. This no doubt suggests that the Sakas, before their entry into India, lived for a considerable period of time in the Irānian Sakastān under Parthian rulers, when they must have received a good deal of admixture of blood. In India the Scythians soon adapted themselves to their new environs and began to adopt Indian names and religious beliefs. They are also known to have contracted matrimonial relations with Indian families."

In contrast to the modern conception, we have the Indian tradition that the Sakas, like the Yavanas, were originally an indigenous Indian people who, on neglecting Vedic rules and rites, had to move towards the north-west where they lived for a long time in constant touch, martial as well as cultural, with India proper.[2] If the Indian tradition is correct, the name Saka comes

[1] *The Age of Imperial Unity*, pp. 120-125.
[2] *Mother India*, October 1956.

from the Sanskrit root *Śak*, meaning "to be able, to be powerful". Have we any incontrovertible argument against this derivation and against their presence in India long before 20 B.C. ? Bhandarkar[1] has drawn attention to the phrase "Śaka-yavanam" in Patanjali by way of a gloss on Panini's II,4.10. Patanjali, according to Bhandarkar, is at present dated between 184-148 B.C. and hence must imply by his phrase the establishment of Saka power in the region on the north-west of India, if not in *Āryavarta* proper, nearly a hundred years before the usual date for the advent of the Sakas in Ki-pin. In fact, his phrase implies, as Sircar[2] is obliged to grant, that the Sakas had already found by that time a place in the Indian society as the *aniravasita* (clean) Sudra. Such a state of affairs can be either explained by changing our current conception of the Sakas' relationship with India or explained away by assuming this conception to be unchallengeable and conveniently taking the phrase in the *Mahābhāshya* as a later interpolation. We would choose, as Sircar[3] does, the second alternative only if we were bent on ignoring the Indian tradition. The first alternative is, on the face of it, the more natural. And as Patanjali is dated by our historians in the earlier half of the second century B.C. because he is known as a contemporary of Pushyamitra Sunga[4] and as Pushyamitra Sunga's time is acknowledged by all to have considerably preceded the time of the Saka Rudradaman, the *Mahābhāshya* serves excellently the possibility of severing Rudradaman from 78 A.D. and shifting him to a more ancient epoch and, *a fortiori*, both Pushyamitra and Patanjali to a still greater antiquity. Nor is Patanjali the sole or the most significant support to the Indian tradition. This tradition receives, as we have already noted,[5] unmistakable support when Agrawala shows from his exhaustive study of Panini that even before Panini's time there was a Saka settlement in the very heart of the Punjab. Whether this settlement was in course of their extrusion from India or in course of a later intrusion by them from abroad is not a question of major importance at the moment. What is of importance is that the Sakas' contact with India is proved to have preceded the first century B. C. by hundreds of years—and we have no grounds for ruling it out in between the pre-Panini settlement and the one a little before the Christian era.

The contact is rendered quite plausible by the acknowledged fact of their existence in eastern Iran in the days of Darius (522-486 B.C.) as well as by the other accepted fact that eastern Iran was the home of the Sakas who occu-

[1] *Indian Culture*, p. 280.
[2] *The Age of Imperial Unity*, pp. 121-122.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 121 footnote 2.
[4] *Ibid.*
[5] *Mother India*, October 1956.

pied the northern and western parts of India. Perhaps even Maues and his line, with their inscriptions and coins in the years of an unspecified era, were really kings who flourished far earlier than computed at present. We shall not discuss the point. The point immediately concerning us is the epoch of the satrapal families of Nahapana and of Chashtana-Rudradaman. We suggest that these families came to India after Darius had conquered the north-western part of the country a little before 518-515 B.C., the date of his inscriptions at Persepolis and at Naksh-i-Rustum where he mentions *Hindu* as a province of his empire,[1] a province which Herodotus[2] calls the twentieth satrapy of the Persian emperor. Our utter lack of knowledge of the relation between the Sakas of the Ki-pin country and those of eastern Iran who ruled over portions of north-western and western India is perhaps a prop to our suggestion since it seems due to a gap of nearly five centuries between the former and the latter Sakas.

No epigraphic or numismatic testimony connected with Nahapana and Chashtana-Rudradaman stands against our suggestion. All that this testimony tells us is the contemporaneity of these satraps and Gautamiputra Satakarni of the Andhra-Satavahana dynasty. The contemporaneity commits us to no date : it only involves the responsibility of seeing that Gautamiputra should not be put into a time-scheme where he would be a misfit. We shall soon inquire whether his place would be the right one round about 500 B.C. Just now we have to look for chronological signs that would lend greater plausibility to our shifting the Mahakshatrapas backward by over five centuries and to our conjecturing that the Saka Era of the Sakas' triumph might be far more ancient than 78 A.D.

Dr. Kern, in his edition of the celebrated Indian astronomer Varahamihira's *Brihat Samhita*, and Colonel Wilford, in the *Asiatic Researches* (IX, p. 156), quote the *Satrunjaya Mahātmya* to the effect that Vikramaditya ascended the throne in the year 466 of the Saka Era. What are we to make of this piece of information ? If we go by the epoch of the traditional Vikramaditya who conquered the Sakas we have to count backward from at least 57 B.C., which is the starting-point of the Vikrama Era, in order to reach the Saka Era. The result is no less than 523 B.C. If Vikramaditya became king before 57 B.C., as is most likely since this date might merely commemorate his victory over the Sakas, we have to go beyond 523 B.C. The author of the *Brihat Samhita* itself comes to our aid in this question with a similar pointer if we again go by tradition. For, traditionally, he is one of the nine "gems"

[1] *The Age of Imperial Unity*, p. 41.
[2] xiii 94.

of Vikramaditya's court at Ujjain—he who is also the first astronomer to make use of the phrase "Saka Era". If tradition is to be believed, the Saka Era he speaks of must be anterior to 78 A.D. And when we ask how much anterior we get a reply that confirms the *Satrunjaya Mahātmya*. Varahamihira has declared in his *Pañchasiddhāntikā* his own epoch to be 427 Saka.[1] If we go backward by 427 years from 57 B.C. which is his time, we get 484 B.C. for the commencement of the Saka Era, but as we learn from Amaraja that Varahamihira died in 509 Saka, 82 years after the epoch mentioned in the *Panchasiddhāñtikā*, we may, in order to make him a full contemporary of Vikramaditya, legitimately suppose him to have died not before 57 B.C. so that we arrive at some year between 566 (i.e. 57 + 509) and 500 B.C. for the Saka Era.

Fortunately we need not rest with a mere approximation, for absolute accuracy is within our reach by a correct consideration of the most often quoted sentences in the *Brihat Samhita*.[2] Here Varahamihira touches on an old Indian notion about the seven stars of the constellation Great Bear. These stars, called Saptarishi (Seven Rishis, Seers or Sages), were taken to be executing a reverse or retrograde movement in relation to the twenty-seven *Nakshatras* or lunar asterisms, each of which falls within a division of the ecliptic of twenty-seven divisions. When the first two stars of the Great Bear rise, a line is to be drawn between them and a vertical through it put exactly midway : then the star in the Zodiac lying along the vertical and equidistant from the two stars is the *Nakshatra* in which the Great Bear is said to be located. In each *Nakshatra* the Great Bear is assumed to remain for a hundred years, so that its complete retrograde movement occupies twenty-seven centuries, at the end of which it returns to the asterism it started from and begins a new movement. Varahamihira's sentences draw upon an astronomer considerably preceding him, Vriddha Garga, and run in Dr. Kern's translation : "I shall tell you, according to the theory of Vriddha Garga, the course of the Seven Seers by whom the northern region is, as it were, protected.... The Seven Rishis were in Maghā when King Yudhisthira ruled the earth, and the period of that king is 2526 years before the Saka Era. They remain moving for a hundred years in each lunar mansion."

These sentences have been usually interpreted, in consonance with some verses in the *Rājatarangini*[3] of the Kashmiri historian Kalhana, to yield a date for the Mahabharata War entirely at variance with the Puranic of 36 years before the Kali Yuga commencing in 3102 B.C. Thus the school of the astro-

[1] I, 8-10; R.G. Bhandarkar, *A Peep into the Early History of India*, p. 62.
[2] XIII, 1-4.
[3] Ch. I. 51-6.

nomer Aryabhatta who follows the Puranas is said to have been opposed by the school of Vriddha Garga and Varahamihira.[1] For, we are told that since 78 A.D. is the Saka Era the period of King Yudhishthira who was present in the Mahabharata War must be calculated to have been 2526 years before 78 A.D. and therefore fixed in 2448 B.C.—in other words, 654 years after the commencement of the Kali Yuga.

V. Gopala Aiyer[2] has asserted as an alternative that the 4th *pada* is less by one *matra* in Varahamihira's verse and that instead of "Sakakala" we should read "Sakyakala" and refer to Sakyamuni Gautama Buddha's epoch. Rao Bahadur P. V. Kane[3] rightly points out what others also have shown in connection with Aiyer : "The rule laid down by the *Chandasutrah*, the *Vrutta-ratnakara* and similar works is that at the end of a *pada* even a short syllable may be held to be long if the metre so requires. The last quarter of the *Brihat Samhita* 13.3, *Sakakalastasya rajnas'cha*, contains 14 *matras* as the syllables stand, but if *cha* at the end of the 4th *pada* is held to be long, following the rules of works on metrics, that quarter contains 15 *matras* and is metrically correct and complete. This (to deem that a short syllable at the end of a *pada* is long when the exigencies of the metre require) is extremely usual with Varahamihira." So Aiyer's alternative to Kalhana's interpretations has to be rejected.

This does not mean acceptance of Kalhana. His interpretation is guilty of two cardinal errors. In the first place it forgets to refer back to Vriddha Garga, see what that astronomer meant and then understand Varahamihira, who claims to be expounding his predecessor. Bhattotpala, the astronomer who succeeded Varahamihira, has given us in his commentary *Chintamani* the very words of Vriddha Garga, which simply run : "At the junction of the Kali and Dwapara ages, the virtuous sages who delight in protecting the people stood at the asterism over which the Pitris preside (that is, Maghā)."[4] If the Seven Rishis who remain in each lunar asterism for a hundred years were in Maghā when Yudhishthira ruled and if they were in the same asterism at the junction of the Kali and Dwapara ages and if no computation puts this junction and the rule of Yudhishthira in two different cycles of the Seven Rishis, then Yudhisthira must have ruled, according to Varahamihira's exposition of Vriddha Garga, within the hundred years during which the Seven Rishis remained in Maghā at the Dwapara-Kali junction. Now, the time of the junc-

[1] *The Vedic Age*, p. 268.

[2] *The Chronology of Ancient India*, p. 73.

[3] *The Journal of the Andhra Historical Society*, Vol. XXI, pp. 41-43.

[4] Quoted in Colebrooke's *Essays*, II, p. 313 and in Cunningham's *Book of Indian Eras*, pp. 9-10.

tion is, in the eyes of all Indian astronomers, not 2448 B.C. but 3102 B.C. Even those who oppose the school of Vriddha Garga and Varahamihira to that of Aryabhatta and of the Puranas say merely that these astronomers place the Mahabharata War after the start of the Kali Era by over six and a half centuries and not that they dispute the date of this era. So, our line of reasoning compels us to think that, for both Vriddha Garga and Varahamihira, Yudhisthira must have ruled and the Mahabharata War been fought in a certain century within which 3102 B.C. falls. There is absolutely no ground for setting these astronomers at loggerheads with Aryabhatta and the Puranas.

In the second place, the usual interpretation forgets that by the words "the period of that king" what is meant may not be the date of the Mahabharata War and of Yudhishthira's coronation but the date of some era exclusively connected with Yudhishthira. In combination with the Saptarishi, Yudhishthira and not the Mahabharata War, which though related to the Saptarishi has a significance beyond Yudhishthira, is perhaps mentioned by Varahamihira specifically because the era with which that king is connected is of the Seven Rishis. In the poem Mahabharata,[1] Yudhishthira who had been on the throne of Hastinapura ever since the end of the War abdicates on hearing of Krishna's death which is the beginning of the Kali Yuga and, putting Parikshit on the throne, sets out with his wife and his brothers on a *Mahāprasthāna*, a world-pilgrimage, in the first year of that Yuga and dies in or about the close of the year 25. (Except for their silence about his death, the Vishnu and the Bhagwata Puranas offer us practically the same information.[2]) Counting 3101 as the first completed year of the Kali Yuga we come to 3076 as the year of his death. "The period of that king" would thus be rounded off in this year. Now, has this year anything to do with the Saptarishi ? Dr. Bühler was the first to bring to the notice of Orientalists the initial date given to the Saptarishi Era by those who, like Kalhana, followed this Era as the Laukikābda or Loka-Kāla, the Era of the People. In the report[3] of a tour in search of Sanskrit manuscripts made in Kashmir, Rajputana and Central India he wrote: "The beginning of the Saptarishi Era is placed by the Kashmirians on Chaitra Sudi 1 of the twenty-fifth year of the Kali Yuga." By taking the first completed year of the Kali Yuga to be 3101 B.C. and deducting 25 from it Bühler came to 3076 B.C. This beginning of the Saptarishi Era is constituted by the Great Bear's passing from Maghā to the next asterism in the reverse order, a change from the condition in which the Seven Rishis are declared to have been at

[1] *Mahāprasthānika Parvam, Adhyāya* I.
[2] Pargiter, *The Dynasties of the Kali Age*. p. 75.
[3] *The Indian Antiquary*, Vol. VI, pp. 264-268 (1877).

the Dwapara-Kali junction. Thus we have two parts in Varahamihira's statement, one referring to Yudhishthira's rule over the earth which synchronises with some period within the hundred years during which the Saptarishi were in Maghā and the Dwapara-Kali junction occurred, the other to the point which marks his death and seems to occasion by that very event the counting of the Era of the Seven Rishis in his honour from the day of his death by the *loka*, the people, of his country.

The date with which Varahamihira's most often quoted sentences are concerned is 3076 B.C. It is this date of which in relation to the Saka Era he writes: "The period of that king is 2526 years before the Saka Era." To realise what he signified by the Saka Era we have only to deduct 2526 from 3076. The result is 550 B.C. Or else, if we calculate the Kali Yuga not from 3101 B.C. but from 3102 B.C., we reach 3077 instead of 3076 B.C. for the commencement of the Saptarishi and hence 551 B.C. for Varahamihira's Saka Era.

Is there any reason to doubt our interpretation ? A second clue is afforded by Varahamihira himself in the form of some particulars about the epoch of 427 Saka mentioned in the *Pañchasiddhāntikā*. In Vol. XIX, page 45, of the *Indian Antiquary* S.B.Dikshit notes alternative readings of the week day in Varahamihira's sloka: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday. Monday is what Dr. Thibaut has given: Dikshit rejects it and prefers Tuesday to Wednesday out of the remaining versions. Whatever the week day, Varahamihira clearly refers to the "beginning" of it and also the "beginning of Chaitra Sukla Pratipadi", the latter phrase meaning the ending of the Chaitra new moon. Dikshit, following Indian usage, takes 427 as the elapsed year, so that 428 would be the current year. But, taking the Saka Era involved to be 78 A.D., he finds that 427 elapsed falls on none of the alternative week days from which we have to choose. If we substitute the Vikrama Era of 57 B.C., we get, according to him, a Wednesday. But this is inadmissable. The sole way to keep Sukla Pratipadi and combine it with one of the alternatives possible and with 78 A.D. as the Saka Era is to change Varahamihira's Chaitra to Vaisakha, for then we arrive at a Tuesday. Dikshit, therefore, opines that Varahamihira must have originally written Vaisakha and not Chaitra. V. Thiruvenkatacharya[1] legitimately objects to this opinion and points out that the whole artificial procedure arises from the obsession with 78 A.D. If we stick to Varahamihira's text, 78 A.D. yields (according to Swamikannu Pillai's famous Ephemeris) nothing except a Friday for 427 elapsed. Even if we regard 427 as current,

[1] His Paper is quoted on pp. 241-248 of Pandit Venkatachalam's *Chronology of Kashmir History Reconstructed.*

78 A.D. yields merely a Sunday. The usual Saka Era is thus ruled out. But if we count 427 elapsed from 551 B.C. we get "the beginning of Chaitra Sukla Pratipadi," as indicated by Varahamihira, at the end of a Tuesday, at nearly midnight, instead of at the "beginning" of a Wednesday—a small margin of error which is hardly serious and within the limits of probability. Thiruvenkatacharya justifiably concludes that Varahamihira intended 551 B.C. to be the Saka Era.

Against the two clues we have cited, one of which seems decisive and the other definite enough, there is only the argument that later writers have unanimously believed Varahamihira to have meant 78 A.D. But uncritical adherence to a belief is no substantial argument. And even in this argument we can trace one grave flaw. For, the case of Bhottotpala, Varahamihira's very first commentator, is somewhat curious. Whereas Varahamihira seems, not only by the phrase Saka-kala used by him in the *Pañchasiddhāntikā* and the *Brihat-samhita* but also by terms like *Śakendrakāla* and *Śakabhupa-kāla* in the latter book (VIII. 20 and VIII. 21 respectively), to suggest the era of coming into power of a Saka king or of Saka kings, Bhottotpala[1] is understood to have commented on these last two terms to the effect that the kings of the Sakas who were Mlechchhas were killed by Vikramaditya and hence the era was called Saka and starts from the date of the slaughter of the Saka kings. The discrepancy between Varahamihira and Bhattotpala disposes one to consider the comment an interpolation. If it is not an interpolation, we should wonder whether Bhattotpala meant 57 B.C. to be the Saka Era or, ignoring the 135 years between this date and 78 A.D., took Vikramaditya to have founded both the Vikrama and the Saka Eras or, oblivious of 57 B.C., fixed the reign of Vikramaditya in the first century after Christ and believed his era to be the Saka of 78 A.D. But the comment has not only the look of an interpolation: it can also be rendered suspect by astronomy. Thiruvenkatacharya[2] shows that certain astronomical details given by Bhattotpala refer to neither 78 A.D. nor 57 B. C.. He notes the fact that several editions of Bhattotpala's commentary on *Brihat-jataka*, another treatise of Varahamihira's, carry at their end the statement: "This commentary was written by me in the year 888 of the Saka on Thursday, Suklapaksha Panchami of the Chaitra month." By Swamikannu Pillai's ephemeris he shows that counting from the Vikrama Era we find Chaitra Sukla Panchami falling not on a Thursday but on a Sunday and, counting from 78 A.D., we reach a Monday instead of a Thursday. On the other hand, February 23 of 338 A.D. satisfies Bhattotpala's specification

[1] *Brihat-samhita*, with the commentary of Utpala, edited by M.M. Sudhakar Dvivedi.
[2] *Op. cit.*, pp. 245-247.

completely. If we go backward by 888 years from this date we reach 550 B.C. as Bhattotpala's Saka Era. As against the reading accepted by Thiruvenkatacharya from several texts we have the version in M.M.Sudhakar Dvivedi, where a different week-day is given. Thiruvenkatacharya agrees with another scholar Nadimpalli Jagannadha Rao, who made a specialist study of Bhattotpala, that Dvivedi has amended the original sloka because from the standpoint of the Saka Era of 78 A.D. it appeared to be an obvious error with its required Thursday.

No doubt, later astronomers, like Bhaskara,[1] considered 78 A.D. the Saka Era and completely forgot 551 or 550 B.C. But, by being forgotten, the Saka Era of Varahamihira and Bhattotpala does not cease to be the middle of the sixth century before Christ. And this exact determination caps, crowns and clinches all that we have said about the time of the Mahakshatrapas. It demands that Darius's "twentieth satrapy" which was Hindu should have Saka satraps.

D. R. Mankad[2] has made some very convincing observations apropos their arrival and settlement. After quoting from Herodotus about Darius's despatch of the navigator Skylax and some others "to know in what part the Indus, which is the second river that produces crocodiles, discharges itself into the sea", and about their sailing down the river to the sea and then reaching on a westward course a place in Egypt, Mankad pauses over the sentence: "After these persons had sailed round, Darius subdued the Indians and frequented the sea." He thinks that the account is not properly worded here. In correction he cites the *Cambridge History of India* (I, p. 336) : "From the statement of Herodotus (IV, 44) it would appear that this achievement (Skylax's exploration of the Indus and the Arabian Sea) was accomplished prior to the Indian conquest (of Darius)...but it seems much more likely that Darius must previously have won by force of arms a firm hold over the territory traversed from the headwaters of the Indus to the ocean, in order to have been able to carry out such an expedition." Mankad agrees with the *Cambridge History* that Darius was already in possession of the Indian country up to the mouth of the Indus, *i.e.* of the whole of Sind. What, however, he adds is that the words of Herodotus—"Darius subdued the Indians"—should not merely be considered misplaced. His argument is that, though the entire Indus could not have been explored without previously subduing the Indians all about the region, Darius carried out a further

[1] Thiruvenkatacharya, *Ayanamsa and Indian Chronology* (*The Journal of Indian History*, Vol. XXVIII, Part II, No. 83). In this article the author also shows in great detail the mistake committed by Swamikannu Pillai in concluding, after fixing 536 A.D. as the year of zero Ayanamsa, that Varahamihira lived in the sixth century A.D.

[2] *Puranic Chronology*, pp. 184-185.

subdual and this conquest is expressed by Herodotus while the other is left implicit. Mankad writes : "The whole of Sind was already under Darius, and I suggest that the Indian regions he conquered after this must have been the regions of Cutch and Kathiawad. That Darius had not gone to the east of Sind is clear from the statement of Herodotus that to the east was a desert (*i.e.* the Rajputana desert). Therefore the Indian regions which Darius conquered, after he was in possession of the whole of Sind, should be to the south of Sind *i.e.* Cutch and Kathiawad; and these were the countries which came into the possession of the Sakas..."

Mankad skilfully develops from several Jain sources, with a somewhat complicated consideration of chronology, the theory that the Sahis said to have been brought by one Kalakacharya from Kabul to fight a king called Gardabhilla were the Sakas who came in Darius's time and not, as popularly believed, in the time just preceding Vikramaditya's and that they had as their two main lines the Mahakshatrapas of the Kshaharata and Kardamaka families. The theory may be correct, but we need not be pledged to it for the correctness of our thesis which simply puts these families in the time of Darius and makes them the establishers of the Saka Era of victory as distinguished from the Saka Era of defeat. In our support we need only to draw from Mankad[1] three further arguments in relation to Darius.

"Herodotus writes (*Cambridge History of India*, I, p. 335) : 'The population of the Indians is by far the greatest of all the people that we know; and they paid a tribute proportionately larger than all the rest—three hundred and sixty talents of gold dust.' The *Cambridge History* writes, 'This immense tribute was equivalent to over a million pounds sterling and the levy formed about one-third of the total amount imposed upon Asiatic provinces.' Now if the Indian Satrapy of Darius included the eastern Punjab and Sind only as the modern historians believe, is it likely that such a huge sum could be paid to him as a tribute ? Vincent Smith, in order to escape from this difficulty, believes with others that 'owing to the changes in the course of the rivers since ancient times, vast tracts in Sind and the Punjab, now desolate, were then rich and prosperous'. But there is no need for such a desperate supposition. According to Herodotus, the Indian Satrapy was the greatest both in population and in tribute. If the Indian Satrapy paid a tribute which was one-third of the total tribute of the Asiatic Satrapies, the Indian Satrapy should have roughly an area which would be about one-third of the total area of the Asiatic Satrapies. The Eastern Punjab and Sind would naturally not satisfy both the tests of area and richness of the Indian Satrapy. But if we once believe that the area

[1] *Puranic Chronology*, pp. 186-187.

ruled over by the Western Kshatrapas formed the Indian Satrapy of Darius, we can at once justify the huge tribute as well as the huge population of the Indian Satrapy.

"About the Indian regions lying outside the power of Darius, Herodotus writes thus, 'they have also all the same tint of skin which approaches that of the Ethiopeans. This country is a long way from Persia towards the south; nor had King Darius any authority over them.' Which is this Indian region, which was a long way from Persia towards the south and the people of which had the same skin-colour as the Ethiopeans ? It cannot be the Punjab or Sind, since they were already under Darius. It cannot refer to Cutch and Kathiawad, as the people of these regions are not as black as the Ethiopeans and as these countries cannot be considered very far from Persia. The rule of Nahapāna extended up to Nasik. Therefore if Nahapāna acknowledged the overlordship of Darius, the Indians outside his Indian Satrapy would be to the south of Nasik; and this region can be described as lying a long way to the south of Persia and the people of this region (Dravidians ?) can be described to have black skin-colour like that of the Ethiopeans. This would, therefore, suggest that the suzerainty of Darius extended up to the Nasik regions.

"The Naqsh-i-Rustum Inscription of Darius distinguishes the following three types of Śakas, all of whom were under him :—Śakāh Somavargāh, Śakāh Tigrakhaudāh and Śakāh Taradaryāh. So far the scholars take this third type of Śakas to be the Śakas who dwelt on the other side of the Caspian Sea, for which there is no ground. But I think that Śakāh Taradaryāh, *i.e.* the Śakas across the ocean, were the Śakas who came to India and...lived in Cutch and Kathiawad and for that reason could very appropriately be described as Śakas across the ocean, *i.e.* the Indian Ocean. This, if true, conclusively proves that the Western Kshatrapas were, at least, in the beginning, the Kshatrapas of Darius."

The sense of their connection with Sind, even of their advent from Sind into Cutch and Kathiawar is vaguely there in modern historians, though their contemporaneity with Darius is never dreamt of. Thus Sircar[1] opines: "The use of both the Kharoshthī and Brāhmi scripts in Bhūmaka's coin-legends probably points to the fact that the Kshatrapa territories not only comprised such districts as Mālwā, Gujarāt and Kāthiawar where Brāhmi was prevalent, but also regions about western Rajputāna and Sind where Kharoshthī appears to have ben in use." Again, he remarks[2] while writing about Nahapana's son-in-law Rishabhadatta (Ushavadāta) : "It seems very probable that...large parts of Rajputāna, probably including a portion of the lower Sindhu valley, lay within the dominions of his father-in-law." He also speaks[3] of the possibility of

[1] *The Age of Imperial Unity*, p. 179.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 181.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 182.

Chashtana having ruled "in the Sind region" at the time when Nahapana too was ruling there as well as further south and east.

Mankad has some other remarks[1] which are worthy of attention because they help to put the Sakas and their Era in the proper setting. The two dynasties —Kshaharata and Kardamaka—are generally regarded as unconnected, but Lévi, Sten Konow and some other scholars have suggested that the founder of the Kshaharatas and that of the Kardamakas are the same person. The first Kshaharata we know of is Bhumaka who was followed by Nahapana : the first Kardamaka is Chashtana's father, called Ysamotika or Zamotika. Those who identify the two point out that Ysam or Zam is originally the Iranian-Scythian word meaning earth and that the opening syllables of Bhumaka are only its Sanskritised form. Raychaudhuri[2] has uttered a warning : identity of the meaning of two names is not necessarily a sign of identity of person, as can be shown by "Kumaragupta" and "Skandagupta", the names of two Gupta Kings, in which "Kumara" and "Skanda" mean the same mythological figure. But there is a difference here : "Kumara" and "Skanda" denote the same mythological figure without connoting the same thing, whereas here is a sameness of connotation. Although even such sameness cannot always be a safe guide, the circumstances of the present case recommend its guidance and induce us to identify the predecessor of Nahapana with the predecessor of Chashtana : Nahapana and Chashtana both seem to use the same era and both of their predecessors exist in the same period and neither of these, unlike their successors, have the royal title *Rājan* and only one of them, namely Bhumaka, issued coins as we should expect if the two were identical and the issue were made with the Indianised form of the name.

To this philological argument Mankad has added another of an indirect type. "An old capital of Kathiawad", he says, "was named Ghumli. Today this Ghumli, which is a ruined village, is considered to have been the original capital of the Jethvas of Porbandar in Kathiawad. In the inscriptions which have been found from this place, this Ghumli is named as Bhūmilikā. I think that this Bhūmilikā was the capital of Bhūmaka, apparently named after him. Philologically it is easy to connect Bhūmilikā with Bhūmaka. But how can we explain the variant Ghumli ? Ordinarily Gh and Bh do not interchange and yet why do we get two spellings of this place like Ghumli and Bhūmilikā ? Here I should point out that the name Ysāmotika or Zāmotika is found in the inscriptions written as Ysāmotika as well as Ghsāmotika....I suggest that Bhūmilikā is derivable from Bhūmaka and Ghumli is derivable from Ghsāmotika (Ghsāmo-

[1] *Puranic Chronology*, pp. 182-183.
[2] *The Political History of Ancient India*, p. 343, footnote 1.

tika-Ghammodiya-Ghummaliya-Ghūmli). If this view of mine about the founding of Ghumli-Bhūmalikā by Ghsāmotika-Bhūmaka be correct, then it follows that Nahapāna and Chashṭana were brothers...."

The fact[1] that, after Nahapana's death at the hands of Gautamiputra Satakarni, Chashtana came into possession of the territories where Nahapana used to rule is a kind of confirmation of our theory of their being sons of the same father and hence heirs to each other's kingdom. The only objection is : Why was one called Kshaharata and the other Kardamaka ? The ending "rata" has been compared with the Iranian "rada", meaning "care-taker", and Sten Konow has understood Kshaharata to be the title of an officer. But there is no certainty. What Kardamaka stands for is also uncertain, though some have derived the name from the Kardama river in Bactria. Perhaps the father had two titles and the chief one used by him was retained by the elder son, while the younger chose to call by the second title the line at whose head he stood, thus distinguishing it from the line of his brother.

If the two had the same father the Saka Era employed by them may be the dynastic era of Bhumaka, counted from the initial year of his accession to power in eastern Iran before coming to India during the reign of Darius. Whether in starting from 551 or 550 B.C. it had any connection with the rise of Cyrus the Great at the same time to the throne of all Persia by his victory over the Medes[2] cannot be decided. Perhaps Bhumaka's accession to power in Drangiana was due to Cyrus's becoming paramount emperor. However, if Bhumaka and Ysamotika were different persons, both probably owed to Cyrus's triumph or to some other less momentous event or to some relationship between themselves a common era.

In any case this era is a fact and a host of approaches lead to its attribution to the Western Satraps. Just three approaches appear to raise a doubt and constitute difficulties. One is *via* the query : How is it that before Alexander's conquest of Persia the Saka Satraps from eastern Iran commenced using a legend in Greek on their coins over and above Kharoshthi and Brahmi ? We have to note what sort of Greek is here. It is corrupt Greek and "later degenerated into a sort of ornament"[3]..."a sort of ornamental fringe around the obverse of the coins."[4] Evidently the use of Greek characters is rather in an elementary stage and hardly a well-established habit : contact with Greece is proved to be merely incipient and not at all fraught with crucial meaning. Such contact can be expected to have been present between Persia and Greece during

[1] *The Age of Imperial Unity*, p. 182.
[2] *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. XXI, p. 211.
[3] *The Age of Imperial Unity*, p. 180.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 184

the reign of Darius who counted the Greeks of Ionia in Asia Minor as his subjects. Sircar[1] informs us : "Greek soldiers and officials are actually known to have been a very important element in the Achaemenian administration." Even some admixture of blood between the Iranian Sakas and the families of Greek administrators within the Persian empire must have taken place. We may add the direct influence of Greek coinage in Achaemenian Persia, an influence which the controversy over the identity of Sophytes shows to be openly accepted by scholars. For, the numismatist R.B. Whitehead[2] has contended that the Sophytes of the Hellenised coins supposed to have been found in a north-western region of India was neither a Hinduised Greek descended from some pre-Alexandrine Greek colony in India nor an Indian subordinate of Alexander the Great and that the coins came to India in the hands of money-dealers. His conclusion is : "Sophytes and his coins belong to the Oxus region : they are probably earlier than 320 B.C., the date given to them by Sir George Macdonald. It is suggested that Sophytes was a local satrap who asserted his independence on the fall of the Persian Empire." In a more recent article in the *Journal of the Numismatic Society of India*,[3] A.K. Narain discusses with expert skill two new coins of Sophytes, one of which represents him as a very young man. Narain offers strong reasons for believing that Sophytes was an Iranian satrap ruling in North-Eastern Iran under the Achaemenians, that his earliest coins were issued before the Macedonian conquest of Persia and that he might have become a Governor in about 335 or 340 B.C. and got reinstated in his office by Alexander just as the Persian Governors Oxyartes and Phratphernes are known to have been. The significant point which concerns us at the moment is the admission by numismatists that Iranian coins with a workmanship even highly imitative of the Athenian "owl"-type and with clear Greek characters could exist in pre-Alexandrine days. Hence Saka coins with a rudimentary Greek legend which soon grew a mere ornament need not be an anachronism in the time of Darius when Greco-Persian contacts were certainly taking place.

The second difficulty arises when we start making use of the Saka Era meant by Varahamihira. Of course it definitely fixes Varahamihira's own date. His *Pañchasiddhāntikā* was written in 550-427=123 B.C. His death occurred in 550-509=41 B.C. By being proved to have lived in the very period in which tradition placed him as one of the nine gems of Vikramaditya's court, he lends the greatest plausibility to Vikramaditya's having himself been a real

[1] *The Age of Imperial Unity*, p. 102, footnote 1.
[2] *Numismatic Chronicle*, 1943, p. 60f.
[3] Vol. XI, pp. 93-99.

king and to his having flourished in the time ascribed to him by tradition. If the *Satrunjaya Mahātmya* is correct, his coronation, dated 466 Saka, happened in 550-466=84 B.C. Yes, we get all these dates and can get a whole new chronological vision of many events for which either Vikramaditya or Varahamihira can serve as points of departure. But our difficulty is not immediately constituted by them. Nor is it constituted in the present context by our fixing for the Junagarh inscription dated 72 the year 550-72=478 B.C. or by taking the last known inscriptional date of Nahapana and inferring from it his death in 550-46=504 B.C. The difficulty comes from the connection of both Rudradaman and Nahapana with the Andhra-Satavahana dynasty.

The Satakarni whom Rudradaman claims to have twice defeated yet spared because of family ties is Gautamiputra Satakarni whose son Vasishthiputra Satakarni, a co-uterine brother of Vasishthiputra Pulumavi, is declared by the Kanheri inscription to have married the daughter of Mahakshatrapa Ru(dra) who is identified with Rudradaman. As Gautamiputra is known from a Nasik inscription to have destroyed Nahapana and the Kshaharata family in his own eithteenth regnal year, that year is proved to be Saka 46 and then his accession would be in Saka 28 or 522 B.C. Further, since his last epigraphic record is dated in his twenty-fourth year, his reign must be assigned to the period 522—497 B.C., a span of 25 years which one version of the Matsya Purana is said by Sastri[1] to give him as against 21 given by some other Puranas and which modern historians[2] also accept though they equate it to *circa* 106-130 A.D.

Here it is most interesting to observe the Andhra dynasty fairly advanced in its career round about 500 B.C. according also to the chronological calculations set forth in the Puranas. Thus the Matsya Purana[3] states.

> Paulomāstu tathandhrāstu mahapadmantare punah :
> antaram tac chatānyaṣṭau ṣat-trimśat-tu samā stathā.

Pargiter, in his *Dynasties of the Kali Age*,[4] ignoring the plural number used for "Andhra" as well as for "Puloma" and overlooking the connective "tatha", accepts the misreading "Pulomastu" and translates[5] the lines with changes and interpolations : "Moreover in the interval which elapsed from the last Andhra king Pulomavi to Mahapadma—that interval was 836 years." The

[1] *The Kings of Magadha*, p. 101.
[2] *The Age of Imperial Unity*, p. 202.
[3] 271.39.
[4] p. 58.
[5] p. 74.

natural translation would be: "Further, the Pulomas (*lit.*, the Puloma-offspring) and the Andhras at an interval from Mahapadma—that interval was 836 years." Such a mode of expression is in tune with that in the verse immediately preceding this, the verse where the interval up to the coronation of Mahapadma from the birth of Parikshit is mentioned (roundly 1500 years in some Puranas, 1050 or 1015 in others). In the verse next to the one we have quoted, the expression "Āndhrāntata" occurs, which Pargiter, with the bias induced by his previous mistranslation, renders as "from the end of the Āndhras"[1] whereas the absence of the true genitive which would demand "Andhrāntam", no less than the practice in the other verses of giving an interval up to the beginning of the next regnal span, suggests: "up to the Andhras at the end", meaning the interval at whose end come the Andhras. In addition, the original bias leads Pargiter to emend, as he admits,[2] an important phrase in the same context and to perpetuate egregious inconsistencies.[3] Correctly seen, the whole Puranic statement yields the year 798 B.C. as a result of deducting 836 years from 1634 B.C. which is the date of Mahapadma's coronation reached by deducting from 3138 B.C. (which is the Puranic date of the Mahabharata war) the sum of the Brahadrathas' 1006 years, the Pradyotas' 138 and the Sisunagas' 360, a total of 1504 years. The year 798 B.C. is for the Puranas the starting-point of the Andhras whose dynasty was evidently known also as the Pulomas, perhaps because of the recurrence of the name Puloma among their kings or else because of an ancestor bearing that name. The length of the Andhra dynasty is given variously by the Puranas: 300, 411, 412, 456, 460 years.[4] Whatever the length we select, the Andhras would still be ruling round about 500 B.C., just as we have found on independent evidence.

We may digress a little to justify, from the Puranas' own chronology of the reign-periods of the pre-Andhra and post-Nanda dynasties, the positing

[1] p. 75.

[2] p. 59, note 46.

[3] Our next article will deal with them.

[4] *The Age of Imperial Unity*, p. 196 (continuation of footnote 1 from p. 195). The *Kaliyugarāja-vrittanta* which is supposed to be a part of the Bhavishyottara Purana gives 506 years; but this book, despite certain attractive features, has been left severely alone by us because it has been proved by R.C. Majumdar (*Indian Historical Quarterly*, Vol. XX, Calcutta, 1944), D.C. Sircar (*Journal of the Numismatic Society of India*, VI, pp. 34-36) and Jagan Nath (*Journal of the Bihar Research Society*, XXXI, i-ii), to contain forgeries based on modern epigraphic and numismatic research up to 1904, so that whatever else is not drawn from modern research or repetitive of the older Puranas is open to the charge of pure invention. Besides, an MS. of the Bhavishyottara Purana, copied in Vikram Samvat 1882, exists in the Tanjore Maharaja Sarfoji's Sarasvati Mahal Library (No. 1556) but has no chapter called *Kaliyugarāja-vrittanta*.

of 736 years between the close of the Nanda dynasty and the beginning of the Andhra. We have to distribute this time-span among the Mauryas and Sungas and Kanvas. Our historians' allotment[1] of reign-periods from the Puranas is 137 for about 10 Mauryas, 112 for 10 Sungas, 45 for 4 Kanvas : the total is 294 years. Now, there are two Puranic traditions—one with a penchant for short periods, the other with a leaning towards long ones. Because of the existence of the latter, Pargiter who favours always the former was still obliged to mention in Note 50 on page 33 of his book that some Puranas gave 300 years to the Sungas and in Note 29 on page 35 he pointed to versions that gave the Kanvas 85 years. As against the 7 or 10 Mauryas cited by most Puranas, he on page 27 admits 12 kings in one version of the Vayu Purana in which the regnal periods added together are 160 years instead of 137. Miss C. Mabel Duff[2], in her table of the Maurya dynasty appended to her *Chronology of India* refers to a version of the Brahmanda Purana in which 11 kings and 233 years are found. T. Narayana Sastri refers in his *Kings of Magadha*[3] to a version of the Brahmanda Purana which mentions the names of all the twelve kings about whom one copy of the Vayu Purana speaks and it states their total reigns to be covering 316 years, just as does that favourite of his and the target of criticism by several scholars, the *Kaliyugarāja-vrittanta*. Sastri[4] speaks also of a manuscript copy of the Vishnu Purana in the Oriental Manuscript Library at Madras, in which the correction of what appears to be a mistake in one letter would yield 337 years. As Pargiter[5] remarks, the Puranic account of the Maurya dynasty has suffered more than that of any other. So we need not hesitate to accept whatever higher figure than even 337 years is found on adding the Sungas' 85 to the Kanvas' 300 and deducting the resultant sum of 385 from the 736 years which is the gap between the termination of the Nanda dynasty and the beginning of the Andhra. We arrive at 351 years as the duration of 12 Mauryas. Thus our translation of the sentence from the Matsya Purana about the Pulomas and Andhras acquires detailed content. Consequently, there is a greater concreteness in the remarkable tallying and mutual confirmation of the Puranic chronology and the one derived from Varahamihira's Saka Era.

A further confirmation of each hails from a Classical quarter : it is the evidence of Pliny. Sircar[6] has said: "Pliny (first century A.D.), who is usually

[1] *The Age of Imperial Unity*, pp. 90, 98, 99.

[2] Quoted in T. Narayana Sastri's *Kings of Magadha*. p, 67.

[3] Pp. 66-67.

[4] Pp. 67-68.

[5] *The Dynasties of the Kali Age*, p. 26.

[6] *The Age of Imperial Unity*, p. 194.

supposed to have utilised the information supplied by Megasthenes (*c*. 300 B.C.), speaks of a powerful king of the Andhra country possessing 30 fortified towns as well as an army of 100,000 infantry, 2,000 cavalry and 1,000 elephants." Sircar comments : "This no doubt points to the large extent of the land occupied by the Andhra people, and it is not improbable that Pliny actually received the information from a later source referring to the Sātavāhana kingdom." We may remark that, while we are persuaded of Pliny's drawing upon Megasthenes in other matters, we have no reason to believe him to be receiving this information from a later source : only our conventional pattern of the succession of dynasties renders us suspicious. If we approach Pliny without bias we get a clear indication of the true time of the Andhras. If they rose to power as late as modern historians make them, there could never have been the kingdom described by Pliny on the authority of Megasthenes. But, if we place them before Sandrocottus, such a kingdom is quite likely; for even after their main line had terminated they could be, because of their immediate glorious past, the most powerful single or confederate kingdom next to Magadha under Sandrocottus.

(*To be continued*)

K. D. SETHNA

Students' Section

POEMS

MARCH 29

(The date on which, in 1914, the Mother first came to Pondicherry)

MARCH 29 can light world-joy,
The new create and the old destroy,
Make bright the gloomy depths below
And heaven's nectars freely flow.

March 29 can carry us
To lands of power miraculous,
Splendour our blinded living here,
And make us each a god's compeer.

March 29 and God's own flower
Smiles sweetly on our lucky bower !
Its very sight, a blessing bright,
Makes hearts a home of God-delight.

March 29 and time and space
Reveal to us a darling face;
Lost ones, we find our Mother dearest,
Our soul of soul, love living nearest.

March 29 and from above
Comes down to us life, light and love;
Death, darkness, hate shall disappear,
Fulfilled rejoice the ancient prayer.

March 29 and the seven seas
Yield their most precious Pearl of Peace
And Purity of the Soul Supreme
In the Mother's beauty, all earth's dream.

March 29 and there awaits
Before the open golden gates
Of the heart of God, the Diamond Land,
The Mother-source of glories grand.

March 29 and lo ! we meet
The most beloved, the Mother's feet;
There mind and body, heart and soul
Reclaim and realise their goal.

PUNJALAL

SMILE OF BLISS

YOUR smile, Sweet Mother, is to me,
What sunshine is to a flower,
Which missing it would slowly droop,
To wither and die in the bower.

I'm grateful indeed when your smile so sweet
Penetrates me for a while;
With a longing heart I await a look,
And hang on to your smile.

It brings me hope, strength, energy,
A bright new life to start;
But when it goes, all hopes are gone,
And fear grips heavily my heart.

An aching loneliness creeps over me,
As I turn back with a sigh,
When sometimes instead of your blissful smile
You cast a grave look and pass by.

Depressed in heart I try to find
If false for true I had mistook,
To incur the displeasure of your light
And deserve that solemn look.

In adoration deep I live,
Basking in the Golden Ray
Of your sweet smile, and with devotion
At your feet my life I lay.

Your Love is all I humbly ask,
Leave me not, Mother, for even a while,
Please take me into your Heart Divine,
And, pray, on me ever smile !

TIM

APPEAL

FRIEND, O soul's friend, for ever stay with me,
Surround with thy bliss that bends down the far sky,
Would that into thy sunny spheres I could fly!
O lay thy touch that makes a drop span infinity.
Let the strings be all astir with thy song,
Myriad notes of heaven's lustre throng,
With thy magic flute ring my soul's profundity.
Set the dark glowing, break the seal of sleep,
Reveal the dawn-white dreams hidden in the deep,
Friend, O soul's friend, stay ever more with me.

ROBI GUPTA

HOW TO WRITE AN ESSAY

(*Some practical hints*)

THESE are the three essentials of a composition :

1) subject-matter
2) arrangement
3) expression.

SUBJECT-MATTER

First of all, think the subject well out. Dive into its deepest depths and then swim all around its circumference. Allow some time for your thoughts to develop and mature and fall into a natural order. If you consult any book —which had better be avoided as far as possible—assimilate what you learn from it, and do not vomit it out in the body of your writing. What you assimilate becomes your own, and will not appear as extraneous or jar the reader's mind. Let no irrelevant matter muddle the subject. Many issues will crop up and many ideas will flash or flit in—brilliant ideas, you will be tempted to think at times—from the surrounding mental atmosphere to confuse, deflect or dilute your principal thought-substance. They have to be rejected at once. They are commissioned by forces that always make for superficiality, incongruity, incoherence and a promiscuous prolixity in writing. Let your thoughts develop in a compact and systematic way.

ARRANGEMENT

When you are master of your subject, arrange your thoughts in the writing order. The art of composition demands a shifting and shuffling all its own, a new ordering of thoughts in relation to their expression in language. A subtle, intuitive perception should guide you in this difficult arrangement of thought-sequence. Sometimes it is very effective to introduce the main idea right at the beginning of a writing, sometimes in the middle, and sometimes towards the close as the natural crown and consequence of its precedents. See that all the ideas are well-knit, and converge upon the central theme of your writing. A well-thought-out composition is an organic whole.

Expression

When the arrangement of the subject-matter is done, you should begin to write, taking particular care to ensure clarity, precision, point, pregnancy, force and beauty. If these six qualities are present in a composition, it will rank as first-rate. Repetitions have to be avoided by all means, and vagueness and emotional froth and flaccidness. This does not mean that emotions have to be eschewed, far from it; but they are to be admitted only to impart a colour, a genial warmth and glow and throb of life, or, if necessary, a fire to the thoughts and ideas. Without an element of feeling or emotion, the writing will be dull and dry, colourless and insipid. Avoid all display, all flourish of thought, feeling or expression. Do not seek to dazzle or amaze your reader, but present your subject in as clear, convincing and graceful a manner as possible. Above all, remember that a simple sincerity and integrity in the expression of your thoughts and feelings are your best safeguards against all tendency to padding or window-dressing.

Words should be chosen with a scrupulous care and a strict sense of frugality, and a great attention should be paid to syntax. A drab, pedestrian composition, provided it contains some genuine thought-substance, can be made vivid and readable by an adroit trimming and shuffling of words and sentences. When your writing is complete, read it twice or thrice slowly, carefully and critically, as if you were reading somebody else's writing, and see that your individuality is rightly reflected in it; that it is a living, limpid stream of your own thoughts and feelings flowing harmoniously through the mould of a plastic language. If your writing embodies the voice of your own thought, clear and mature, it is sure to command attention, even if it be not elegantly dressed; but if it is an echo or a falsetto, it will fall flat even with all its glitter and peacock array.

Lastly, observe the total effect of the writing, and then examine its parts in relation to the whole; and if you find that the parts hold well together and constitute an harmonious unity, your labour has not been in vain.

Rishabhchand

THE PEAKS OF PERFECTION

"Not to go on forever repeating what man has already done, is our work, but to arrive at new realisations and undreamed of masteries."

THESE WORDS of Sri Aurobindo seem to throw out a challenge to the very youth of India if not indeed the world. Especially do they seem to challenge the youth and students of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram and the followers of the Integral Yoga.

Do not these lines shout aloud the ideal attitude for our immediate existence ? We are only too prone to admire the excellences of the Past when we should perhaps be developing a more critical faculty of appreciation of the past glories and viewing them in a more integral light than that of static wonder. We easily look back on the peaks of splendour forgetting that there were the abysses of squalor, the valleys of ignorance which also went with them. There were peaks, no doubt, in the great passages of the Past but they were built upon depths of suffering and multitudinous mounds of misery; we are on the Road rising from the vaster plateaux of equality and intelligent life to grander summits of consciousness which will tower above those eminences of the past as the heavens tower above the Himalayas.

Yet what practical assurance can we give to the young student or aspirant climbing this Glorious Road of the Future ? What is the one thing most needed at the present stage to help him on his way ?

The Mother has told us that the one thing most likely to help a child is to help him to know himself. For him to know what is most needed of him would perhaps go a long way for him to know himself.

What is the fundamental force of habit which makes us go on repeating what others have already done rather than venturing always after new realisations ? Is it not the innate sense of *security* from which we are loth to depart ? And of what is this security made ? Is it not rather of the stuff of dreams ? Will it bear the weight of persistent analysis seeking the truth ?

If we look at it closely it will be seen that such a security is made up of those elements which are often the substance of our human weaknesses and failings—such arguments as the mind indulges in as:

Let us not act differently than usual lest we look foolish in the eyes of others.

Let us not try something new lest we lose what we already have or what we have already accomplished.

Let us not attempt the unknown lest we fail.

And so on with infinite variations of so-called intelligent reasonings designed to keep us in a conservative age where things have the appearance of security because of fixed standards and well-known formalised ideas with which we are familiar and comfortable; but to any progressive intelligence or spirit of youth it is obvious that such a security is based on *fear*:

The fear of looking foolish in the eyes of others.
The fear of losing what one already has or what one has already accomplished.
The fear of failure.

What is the remedy ? Well, perhaps the first thing is to know that this fear is not really so powerful, and certainly not at all as necessary as is generally imagined.

Take, for example, the question of learning a language. A very small child learns to speak much quicker than an adult simply because it learns by making mistakes, it has no fear of the mistakes, for they are only the falls of a game and part of the fun. It is blissfully free of the fear that besets the adult who is always on the *qui vive* to see if someone is laughing, and so clings to the security of silence and caution which feels round every corner before venturing to look,—whereas the child dashes round and on to the next turn, not caring for laughter or the possibility of a fall, and in natural consequence finds the right attitude for progress so that even if there is a fall it turns it into an opportunity for further progress.

Take, as another example, the slightly older child when the teacher asks him to read aloud in the class. Either he is shy—full of the fear of his class-mates laughing at him—or he can so lose himself in the subject-matter he is reading that he is not even aware of the class as such or, if he is, has no fear of being laughed at for making a mistake. This is the real problem of shyness. It means that *one is more conscious of oneself than of the work to be done*. This prevents us from doing many things we might easily do, from trying out many new methods which might enlarge our living and widen our consciousness towards new horizons; it stops us from pursuing new avenues of beauty, new paths of knowledge, new regions of truth and light—simply because we are

afraid of letting others see that we are still learning, still make mistakes, can still look foolish, for we are still only human.

We might take, for another example to illustrate our meaning of losing oneself in work, the gardens of the Ashram. When visitors come and see the excellence of the flowers produced, an excellence of blooms which in spite of the proximity of the sea defies the salt air and the salt-sandy soil, they are amazed because nowhere else is there such a constant flowering all the year round as in the Ashram Gardens.

The reason ?...The Mother's loving influence and no doubt the conscious participation of the gardeners who are not just gardeners but sadhaks doing the work as their sadhana. To them a flower is not just a flower, a pretty bloom bloom to be admired, but a child which requires the love of the Mother and the infinite care and patience necessary during the process of its growth. So also is it with the children of the Ashram, the spiritual blossoms of the future life, and those other gardeners, the teachers and instructors, under whose love, care and patience they will learn and grow. But always one must be in the attitude of the joy of growing and of seeing the possibility of new realisations—the joy of hearing the call of adventure along the highway of human endeavour to climb the Peaks of Perfection.

NORMAN DOWSETT

LIBRARY CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

INTRODUCTION

THE OBJECT OF CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM AND ITS MEANS

With the increased knowledge of things of this world the publication of books on different subjects of knowledge has also increased exceedingly during modern times. As its consequence, libraries of all kinds big and small have begun to flourish. This has necessitated the development of a Library Science and its Laws; so much so that it has even become a Post-graduate Course in some Universities, like that of Delhi. Of this Library Science, library classification in only one branch. The object of library classification is to help a reader to get the book he requires on a subject, and also to find for every book its reader; its object is also to save the time of a reader in getting at his book, and save the time of the staff also in providing the reader with the necessary book in the library. The means adopted to achieve this object is to arrange the books in a helpful order and to maintain that order. To achieve this object by certain methods, classification Systems of books in libraries have been developed into a Science that is based on some universal principles of life.

Every reader generally asks for a book by naming a certain subject on which he wants to read. So the first principle of classification is based on subjects. When he knows that there are several authors on the same subject, then he names the author also. This forms the second principle on which classification system is based. If there are different editions of the same book by the same author, this information also would form part of the classification system. All these three informations regarding the book are given on a label attached on the back of the book. To write these three informations in all their details on a small label is not possible, and so a symbolic method which is easy to remember both by the reader and the issuer of the books is evolved. The symbols for this purpose that have been used almost by all the classification systems in the world are the Arabic numerals, the letters of the Roman alphabet, some punctuation marks and some symbols other than these. Dewey has used for his classification system only the Arabic numerals and a dot; Ranganathan has used all the above species of symbols. It matters little how many of these species of symbols are used so long as no complexity is created and so long as the object of the classification system is served.

Thus by these three informations regarding the book which is wanted by a reader it is individualised from other books in the library, and since the book is called by what is written on the label, this writing on the label forms the "Call Number" of the book. The information on the label that concerns only the subject of the book is called the "Class Number" of the book. In classifying a book on the basis of subjects, every librarian or every editor of a classification system divides all knowledge of the world into a certain number of main classes to which the subjects lend themselves.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF SUBJECT CLASSIFICATION

The main classes into which all knowledge is divided differ from man to man, according to his conception of them. The main classes may be anything from ten to twenty six or even less or more. But since the editors of classification systems use either the Arabic numerals or the letters of an alphabet, they are forced to reduce the main classes of all knowledge, either to 10, to suit the number of Arabic numerals, or to extend the number to 26, or more to suit the number of letters in the Roman alphabet. This is what Dewey and Ranganathan have done to suit their purpose. But others are not bound to follow their methods. Whatever method helps to fulfil the original object of classification system may be adopted by the librarian or the editor of the classification system.

But, in fixing the number of main classes of knowledge also, some general principles of life which are based on the highest authority must be followed; each person cannot follow his own method and say this is the general principle. To suit the number of Arabic numerals, Dewey has put the main classes of knowledge as only 10; it does not mean that they are really 10 only. For instance, he has put one of the main classes as History but has included in it Geography and Travel, and given the number 9 to these subjects together and expanded the number and the three subjects as well, on some sound basis. Readers understand this process and are not misled by the process of expansion of the three subjects under one main class. But there are subjects like Yoga and Mysticism with which Dewey has not dealt at all, or has dealt incompletely. He has put Mysticism under the main subject Philosophy. But does Philosophy include really all Mysticism ? If we take Sri Aurobindo as our highest authority, it certainly does not include all Mysticism. So, for us, it has to be clubbed with one of the ten main classes as a main and separate subject and expanded separately to lead the readers correctly in selecting their books. Then again, the subject Philosophy, as is taught in Universities, really includes Psychology.

While Dewey has accepted the inclusion, Ranganathan has put it as a separate subject, and perhaps as a main subject too. Since Psychology forms part of Philosophy, to put it thus misleads a reader. These things are pointed out here only to show that it is not inevitable that these editors of classification system alone have to be followed by a librarian in classifying the books in his library; his business is to guide correctly the readers in selecting their books on a subject or its branches, and so long as he is doing this, he will be on the right path. So the general principle in deciding the number of main classes of knowledge is to see whether all the subjects of knowledge in the world are brought into them and to see that no branch of any main class is separately put as a main class of knowledge by itself. Thus if the main classes of knowledge are fixed as more than 10, they can be clubbed together to reduce them to 10, to suit the number of Arabic numerals. Thus if Yoga and Mysticism are also main classes of knowledge, though they may sometimes be branches of other subjects or other subjects may be their branches, they can be clubbed together with any of the other ten and, in the course of expansion, they can be given separate sub-numbers under that main class, as has been done for geography and travel in the main class of History to which the number 9 has been assigned by Dewey.

The method, adopted by Dewey and Ranganathan, of expansion of a subject, whether main or its branch, along with the number assigned to it, on the basis of decimal notation is wonderfully suited for library classification. Just as the division of the one earth into continents, and then the division of each continent into countries, the countries into regions and the regions into sub-regions, enable every place on earth to be distinguished from every other place, so also the one knowledge which is the total knowledge of all the terrestrial plane, divided into its units, the units into tens, the tens into hundreds and the hundreds into thousands and so on, enables the expanded numbers of each unit with their subject meanings to be distinguished from the expanded numbers of any other unit with their subject meanings. It is this quality of decimal notation that enables us to expand each of the main classes into series of orders of divisions, and to assign numbers to them, so as to give a separate number to a separate subject. Thus no number can mean two subjects and then all books in the library can be arranged in serial order in shelves and books on the same subject can be brought together. It is this that enables one to locate an individualised book on the shelf.

Apart from the method of arranging all books on one subject together, and all books of all knowledge serially, there is one other principle of library classification system which is very important. It consists in correctly expanding each of the main classes of knowledge into its branches and sub-branches and then correctly giving information on the book as to the branch of subject it

represents. If this is done wrongly, the reader can never select his book correctly with regard to a subject main or branch, that he wants. It is by this correct guidance to the reader that most time and energy are saved for both the reader and the librarian. The expansion of subjects like Religion, Philosophy, Yoga, Mysticism, Occultism and Psychology made by Dewey and Ranganathan does not satisfy the needs of most libraries, since it is not based on the ideas mentioned about them by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. The knowledge on which their expansion is based contradicts altogether the knowledge that is given to us by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. The expansion of these has to be done by persons who can interpret books and their writings on the basis of Sri Aurobindo's and the Mother's ideas on these subjects.

Technical Method of Forming a Class Number

The first thing is to divide all subjects of knowledge in the world into as small a number of main subjects as is possible, so that they can be distributed among the 10 Arabic numerals. They are 1. General. 2. Philosophy. 3. Religion 4. Yoga. 5. Mysticism. 6. Social Science. 7. Languages. 8. Pure Sciences. 9. Applied Sciences. 10. Arts. 11. Literature. 12. Travel. 13 Geography. 14. History. If other classification systems have mentioned more than these as main subjects, it may be so according to their outlook. Spirituality may be mentioned by some as not included in the above list; but to our knowledge it is included in mysticism, or yoga, or religion, or philosophy, as part of each of these and does not exist outside them. So the above 14 classes may be taken as all the main classes of total knowledge in the world. These have to be divided between the 10 numerals and one number assigned to each of the ten groups. Now, if Religion, Yoga and Mysticism are clubbed together, similarly Travel, Geography and History can be clubbed together. Thus they become ten classes. The first of these subjects is assigned O number; and the other 9 groups are assigned numbers serially from 1 to 9.

Thus the 14 subjects, as distributed between the 10 numerals, are given as the first summary in Schedule A. Then each of these 10 classes is expanded as per decimal notation into 10 numbers which form the detailed branch subjects of that class. In expanding each class into 10 division, all knowledge about the particular class has to be included in the 10 divisions, and nothing of it must be left out of them. To clarify this idea, let us take an example, say of a main class of subjects, History. It can be expanded in three ways, (i) by regions, (ii) by periods, (iii) by aspects. If the first order of expansion of History is made altogether by periods, since the different regions of the earth do not have their his-

tory in the same periods, when it becomes necessary to indicate the history of a region by a period different from what is indicated in the first order of expansion, difficulty will arise. So a total knowledge of the possibilities of the various expansions and a little thinking will enable one to know how at each stage the subject has to be expanded. For a wise expansion a total knowledge is always necessary.

Dewey in his system has used the dot after the 3rd digit; but the way in which it is used serves no purpose. The dot along with other punctuation marks are used by us in different ways for different purposes. Geographical divisions of the earth into continents, countries, regions, sub-regions are given in the class 9 from 940 to 990. This class of geographical divisions is adopted wherever it is necessary to give an added geographical meaning to a subject; ex., 015 is bibliography of countries; .54 represents India by geographical position. So 015.54 means national bibliography of India. The dot in this system signifies that what comes after it is a geographical class number. Similarly "Language divisions" with a comma preceding it, "Style divisions" with a dash preceding it, "Problem divisions" with a colon preceding it, "Form divisions" with a zero preceding it are standardised and used for added meanings.[1]

NARAYANA C. REDDI

(To be continued)

[1] Any subscriber of *Mother India* who wants to adopt this Classification System for his library, big or small, may write to the author for free practical suggestions.

Published by

P. Counouma, Pondicherry

Yearly Inland Subscription: Rs. 10/- Single Copy: Re. 1/-

Foreign- £0-16-0; $ 2.50

Printed at the Sri Aurobindo Ashram Press,

Pondicherry 215/357/1000

Regd. No. M 6326